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ADULT LEADER

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1938

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A Journal of Christian Education and Church Work

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International Lesson Guides 1938

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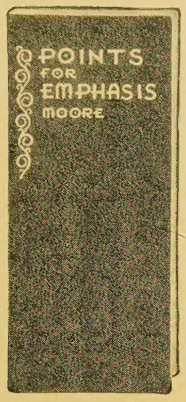

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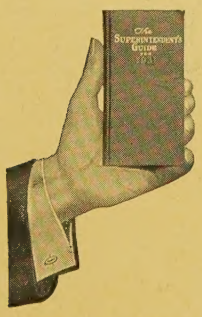

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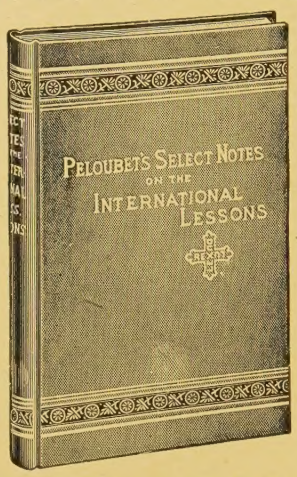

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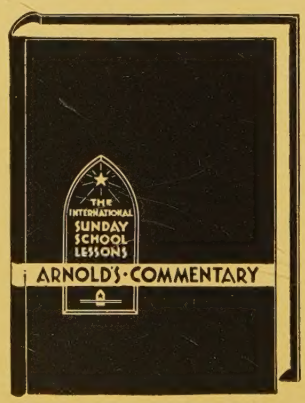

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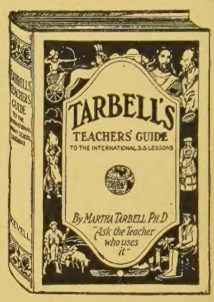

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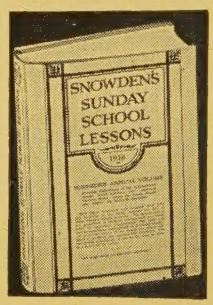

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ADULT LEADER

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MILES W. SMITH
Editor-in-Chief Sunday School Publications

MITCHELL BRONK
Editor of ADULT LEADER

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Some Writers

FOR THIS NUMBER

HN SNAPE is one of the best-nown ministers in the Baptist de-ination. He has been pastor of great rches, a platform speaker always in and, and a prolific writer of articles books. He contributes regularly to ULT LEADER a devotional study apply-to one of the Uniform Lessons of the ith.

RDMANN SMITH is pastor of the Austin Baptist Church, Chicago. He previously president of Ottawa Uni-sity. Doctor Smith is now serving second term as president of our Pub-tion Society.

HARLES C. STILLMAN, who writes the "In the Men's Class" chers' helps, is director of the School Social Administration in Ohio State versity. Since 1935 he has also been inistrator for the Ohio Works Prog-s Administration. He is the author *Social Work Publicity* and of many iological and economic monographs articles.

●

NEXT MONTH

the February issue we shall give the rst of a series of specially prepared tributions on the place of the layman the church, and especially in the pro-m of Christian education. This initial icle will be written by Dr. Wilbour E. nders, headmaster of the Peddie ool, Hightstown, N. J. This number l also contain an article on "Chris-ity in Europe at the Crossroad," by f. Adolf Keller, of Geneva, Switzer-d, general secretary of the European ice for Interchurch Aid.

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Editorial

A Broader Program

THE FIRST OF THE YEAR is proverbially a good time for stock-taking—for individuals as well as businesses—and should be for churches and church schools. It is likewise—or should be—a good time for branching out. Take Oliver Wendell Holmes' "Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul!" and apply it in cold, practical action to your church program. The various directive agencies of our Northern Baptist Convention are just now making drives and propaganda for it—to induce our churches to build bigger programs, to "branch out," in short.

At a religious-education conference that we recently attended such items were formulated educationally—and written on a blackboard—as follows (what is meant is that every local church shall give attention, and more and better attention, not to one, or one or two, of these features, but to all of them): (1) *The Bible and Religious Literature.* (2) *Worship.* (3) *Missionary.* (4) *Fellowship.* (5) *Service.* (6) *Social Education.* (7) *Stewardship.* (8) *Evangelism.* (9) *Leadership Training.*

Every church or church school is asked to ask itself: "Are we disregarding any of these vitally important parts of a program?" For they are vitally important, not only in Christian education, but in Christian work in general. It is claimed that a church, or church school, loses in efficiency just to the extent that it neglects any of these features. They interlock. We go back to Paul's simile, one body, many members, and bodily health and efficiency through them all. A religious body, be it a church or a church school or an organized class, that does not cultivate fellowship freezes. If it fails in its social-service obligations to the unfortunates of its community it gets a black eye from that community. If it neglects the missionary far-look it dries up. If evangelism is its sole objective, the chances are that it will lose the souls it wins. Study again our Northern Baptist symbol for the current Convention year: "Better Baptist Churches!" and the "Forward Movement" panel heads not one, but the several fields of church activity and Christian service. Let Sunday school workers apply all this to themselves and their school; not make the application simply to the church, or the church in general. When we generalize we never get anywhere.

Invariably at the spring house-cleaning and the autumnal house-cleaning my mother would try so to rearrange the furniture, pictures and bric-a-brac that the home would have a new and different aspect. Then for a couple of weeks she would be uncomfortable because of the changes. She wanted them—an she didn't. I always think of her when I hear discus sions—perhaps heated—about proposed changes in ou church and Sunday school programs; for men i general are like that, in most cases. The journe invites us, and then we are homesick. When altera tions in the format of our periodicals are contem plated, we know that some of our readers will b pleased and some not. This pull and restraint take together are on the whole a blessing. We thus do no get too far away from our moorings, but they do no unduly hold us. It makes us at once conservative and liberals; which is also a blessing. Jesus said "Think not that I came to destroy (the old)," an then in the very next breath there follows his revolu tionary, "But *I* say unto you."

For Whom Are You Doing It?

PEOPLE ENGAGED IN CHURCH WORK not infrequently complain of the ingratitude they meet. We mus admit that thanklessness is a pretty common fault Jesus himself had abundant experience of it. Thos nine lepers who took his blessing with never a "thank you" are shamefully outstanding Bible characters Young ministers get plenty of disillusionments. I did A young woman belonging to our Sunday school an congregation had a long and serious illness. Day afte day I called at the hospital and then at the home. took her flowers, and when she was convalescent books. I was never thanked, but worst of all, as soo as she was up and around she went and joined an other, a Methodist, Sunday school and church. In thi instance a splendid old Baptist minister, who was m neighbor and to whom I used to carry my complaint and problems, taught me a wise and needed lesson in words to the point: "For whom were you doing al that you did? For that young girl, for your churc and as a part of your job, your professional task, o for Christ, whom you are supposed to be serving Always ask yourself that question when you feel you ministries unappreciated. Christ, at any rate, full appreciates everything we do for him, and always w get his thanks. Let it go at that. So you will sav yourself a lot of selfish concern over the ingratitud of the people among whom you work, for whom yo do—maybe die—as a Christian minister." When hear Sunday school teachers remark on the callou unappreciation of the boys and girls of their classes or hear pastors half-bitterly complain that no on seems to realize, at least in terms of expressed grati tude, all that they are doing for the church and th

mmunity, I feel like putting to them the question, But for whom are you doing it?" Or asking them read again and take to heart the words of Bonar's mn: "Thy joy to do the Father's will . . . The aster praises, what are men?"

he Gospel as an Irritant

A MAN WAS EXPLAINING to me why he never goes church, nor reads the Bible, and keeps aloof from erything pertaining to the Christian religion. He id: "I seek above all else peace in my inward life. believe a man should cultivate harmony and quiet- ss of soul. And this gospel of Christ stirs me up, ouses my antagonism, has an irritating effect on me." That man certainly had a better compre- ension of Christianity than some Christians have. e call it a gospel of peace. So it is, but at the same me it is a gospel of discord. This is one of its many radoxes.

We know well enough what it is. It is the word at men would rather not hear. It is the bluntness the truth and the discomfort of honest judgment. is the command to forsake the sin the heart loves, take up the burden from which the flesh shrinks, d to engage in the service that seems irksome and sagreeable. There is abundant peace and comfort in e gospel of Christ? Yes, but that isn't all there is. me ministers and many journalists are much given the discussion of the question why people do not to church. Isn't the chief reason, after all, that ey know that they will hear there so many un- easant truths? Every preacher and teacher of the spel is to be both congratulated and commiserated, r while on the one hand he has a message of infinite y and benediction, on the other he has to say many teful words. A well-known New York minister told e of the complaints of some of his congregation that was not preaching "the old gospel." His reply to em was: "The old gospel that I used to preach, I ow I'm not giving it to you now; but it is new only this sense, that I am presenting Christ's teaching ain and bare, just as he gave it; and the trouble with u is it cuts right down into your hearts and lives; comes straight home to you; I'm concentrating its ys, as before I didn't, and it burns."

It is a common remark among ministers that if one their number meets no opposition, it is good evi- nce that he is being unfaithful to his prophetic office. ay we not apply the same criterion to the Christianity any age? Should we of this twentieth century's ird decade be surprised and appalled at the anti- hristianity that is abroad almost everywhere, that is nashing so many of the things of the spirit and aspheming so dreadfully the holiness of God and his hrist? Does it not prove that the church of our time, r all its shortcomings, is still true to the gospel with which it has been entrusted—at least so true that therefore wickedness, the lovers of darkness, hate and fight it? Martin Luther, in his droll, parabolic fashion, said that every time he got up in a pulpit to preach, forthwith he could hear the devil scratching and digging at the roof-tiles.

In a Danish story, Carit Etlar's *White Stone,* the old man, Terkel, has been guilty of a crime. The lame girl, Karen, goads him to make confession. Her pleadings and persistence so exasperate him that he comes to hate and shamefully abuse her. At last she wins out, and after he has made full acknowledgment and paid the penalty, Terkel finds himself adoring Karen, who has meanwhile become his daughter-in-law. One day that hated accusing conscience of yours will ring pleasantly within. The honest preacher has a thankless task, but in the end sinful and faulty men are glad that he wounded them with the gospel sword. Job said, "Though he slay me." Christ slays us with the sword of his truth, but it makes us his lovers, for he strikes down the man of sin that the new man of the Holy Spirit may live within you; defeats your lower self that your higher, nobler nature may assert itself. He came not to send peace on earth, but a sword; yet the sword wins a more perfect peace.

W. Edward Raffety

AS THIS NUMBER OF ADULT LEADER is being prepared word comes of the distressing fatality that brought to a close the busy, usefully energetic life of this distinguished religious educator. Though it must be belated, mention of Doctor Raffety's passing should not be omitted from our columns—to which he was a frequent and valued contributor. Moreover, the present set-up of our Department of Sunday School Publications is largely his work, and several of our editorial staff were his appointments. He came to the Society in 1916, from a professorship in the Kansas City Theological Seminary, and for eight years was our editor-in-chief. In 1924, when the Council of Religious Education was organized, he went to Chicago to be editor of the Council's *Journal.* This excellent magazine is pretty much a creation of Doctor Raffety's and since his retirement from its editorship has been continued along lines instituted by him. The ten years of teaching that he put in at the University of Redlands have been a splendid conclusion to a life almost entirely given to the vastly important discipline of Christian education. Our issues for 1936 contained a series of articles by Doctor Raffety, "Sunday School Leaders I Have Known"—Blackall, Marion Lawrence, Morris Fergusson, Chalmers, and others. It is a glorious group that W. Edward Raffety has now gone to join; we shall endeavor to have someone who knew him well continue the series referred to with an article about him.

The Gospel of Mark: A Preview

THE UNIFORM LESSONS, FIRST QUARTER, 1938

By John Snape, D. D., Los Angeles, California

THE four living Creatures mentioned in Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:10) are interpreted by many early writers as signifying and symbolizing the fourfold gospel, the four faces representing the four evangelists.

The face of a man, denoting Matthew, who describes the activities of Jesus as to his human nature; the face of an eagle, indicating John, who begins his Gospel with the declaration, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God"; the face of an ox, indicating Luke, who begins his narrative with the priesthood of Zacharias; the face of a lion, indicating Mark, who begins his Gospel like a roaring lion, calling men to repentance.

Some students of the New Testament, however, find in scattered verses through them key verses to the Gospels. For example, it has been said that one may gather all there is of the First Gospel around three words: "Jewish—king—rejected." Jesus came as king to the Jewish people, and the Jewish people rejected their king. That's all there is of Matthew. The central thought of the Third Gospel may be gathered up around the thought of the Son of man. The key chapter of Luke is the fifteenth, which has been called by even such a half-believer as Renan the "most beautiful chapter in literature"—setting forth the love of the father for the son at home or away from home. The key verse of the Fourth Gospel is the last verse of the twentieth chapter. John is taking no chances with his readers. He has begun his writing in a sonorous and significant way, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God"; but when he is almost entirely through he reveals—or repeats—his motif. He says, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." The key verse of the Second Gospel is the first verse, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God."

Mark has been regarded as the "interpreter" of Peter; a faithful exponent of what Peter saw and heard and communicated to him; so much so that it has been suggested that we might entitle his Gospel "The Gospel according to Saint Peter." It has been suggested, also, that Mark presents his own picture in the fourteenth chapter, where he refers to himself as the "young man" who was present with Peter at the time of the arrest in the garden.

Mark is the shortest of the four Gospels. It could be printed on the front page of a metropolitan daily. It introduces few details and employs diminutives, which gives freshness and light to the whole narrative. Mark is fond of certain words; for example, "straightway"—which is invariably used and marked in the new revisions.

Mark introduces us to John the Baptist, and gives the picture of His baptism. He shows the "double difficulty" John faces—a baptism unworthy of the candidate, and a candidate of whom the baptism was unworthy. Jesus dissolved all difficulties by saying, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

If the first step in finding lost men, and putting them on the clew to their salvation, result in making them supremely conscious of God, then the first New Testament evangelist was John the Baptist. He was a personified conscience to the men of his generation.

The New Testament speaks of several Johns: John the apostle, author of the Fourth Gospel; John Mark (Acts 12:12); the John belonging to the high-priestly family (Acts 4:6), and John the cousin of Jesus, known as John the Baptist.

He was a long-haired, roughly clad, bare-legged country preacher, dwelling in the deserts until the day of his showing unto Israel. He was the first open-air evangelist of New Testament times. He was a mountain-giant. His auditorium was the valleys and hillsides of Judea; his pulpit the ground on which he might be standing; his congregation the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, soldiers, publicans and sinners who came out to hear him—but feared and hated while they heard.

Three things entered into his preparation, equipping him for his brief heraldic ministry: separation, consecration, inspiration. He was to drink neither wine nor strong drink; he was to spend his time of preparation in retirement in the

(*Concluded on page 7*)

THE LOST HOUR

By Clarence Edwin Flynn, Mason City, Iowa

I lost a golden hour today;
I let it slip unused away;
I only idled on and on—
Then looked for it, and it was gone.
I had not meant to waste it so;
I didn't look, I didn't know,
I didn't spur it scornfully,
I only let it slip from me.

I moaned to Life the old refrain:
"I'm sure you'll give it back again.
I meant to use that hour to bless
A weary world with happiness.
I really did, but suddenly
Time snatched my hour away from me."
Life said, "My child, there is no power
That can restore a vanished hour!"

The Teacher's Mistake

By Eldridge B. Hatcher, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania

)VER in Japan a foreign missionary, new to the work, ked Kagawa for advice as to how should commence his ministry in at land. Kagawa replied: "Sit ll. You American missionaries e in such a hurry, running here, ere and everywhere in your cars. ke time to study. Win one, and ch him; win a few, and teach em; then send them out to win ers." The key words here are, Win one." This is Kagawa's thod. He deals with one!

Is not this the key to the Sunday hool teacher's work? The mis-ke of many teachers—and some eachers—is dealing with the pils *en masse*. The teacher sees fore him a group of faces. He s only a few minutes for his in-ruction; he is tempted to talk to e group, to fling out words in the pe that they will strike some-here. He makes a monumental stake in not dealing with them as *dividuals*.

Teacher-training is today the art of Christianity's battle. Out our church schools come our eachers, teachers and Christian aders. Nothing therefore can be uch more important than the aining of the teachers. And one te that should be sounded loudly all teacher-training courses is at it is the teacher's dealing th the individual scholar that unts. The teacher should study ch member of his class until ery pupil stands out before m as a distinct bundle of quali-es and tendencies. "Be sure," id Anatole France, "that a ngle, beautiful life has brought e world more good than all e masterpieces of mechanism." a teacher will only get that nception of the possibilities of e individual, he will find his ork vastly more fruitful.

Mr. Moody said that he be-ved he had brought more souls Christ by dealing with one rson at a time than he had by rmons preached to multitudes. People converted in revival meetings almost always report that it was some particular Christian friend that brought about the decision. We know that Christ in his ministry magnified the individual. He seemd to feel—if we may use a modern expression not irreverently—that he had his hands full if he had before him even one humble, illiterate person. The problem of Protestantism is the problem of the individual. How then must the teacher deal with his pupils on the individualistic basis?

He must talk to them as individuals so that each will take the message to himself. A heavenly art, and the teacher must surrender to the Holy Spirit to acquire it! Spurgeon had it, though he had thousands before him when he preached. A Canadian Baptist clergyman says that he heard Spurgeon preach to a great multitude of people at an evening service, but that before the great preacher had been speaking five minutes he forgot all about the huge audience and the accompaniments of the wonderful service; forgot even the people who were sitting beside him; felt that he was the only man in the world and that the preacher had been especially sent of God to talk to his heart and conscience. That is real preaching. It pays to preach to one.

A Mr. Benson, who was converted through Moody's preaching, and who tells the story of his conversion, says that he dropped into the great hall in which Moody was preaching, not with the desire for salvation, nor with any religious interest in his heart, but largely to see what was going on. Before Moody had been preaching many minutes he had him in his grip; he felt that Moody was preaching to him and him alone. Can the church school teacher make his individual scholars have that feeling about their teacher?

Then the teacher must deal individually with his scholars "on the outside." Several years ago, in Indianapolis, a Christian gentleman, being told of a young man in the city who had "intellectual difficulties about the Christian faith," called on the young man, sat down with him in his little bedroom in the boarding-house, and talked with him. After a while the young man was on his knees, the visitor prayed for him. The result was that he accepted Christ. This gentleman went to his pastor and told the story. He said, "I have had many thrilling experiences, but this outranks them all." The man who stayed in that hall bedroom with the strange young man until one o'clock in the morning was Benjamin Harrison, then ex-President of the United States.

That was the type of individual work "on the outside" that the teacher must do with his scholars. If they are not Christians, he must take them, one by one, and lead them to Christ. If his scholars are all Christians, then the teacher has the lofty task of wooing and winning them toward a higher, Spirit-filled character and life; and this too must come by personal, individual touch. "In the light of the King's countenance is life." The teacher must get his scholars to face that countenance.

Crime, Delinquency, and the Teaching of Morals

By A. Q. Burns, Los Angeles, California

BY all reckonings America is the most lawless nation among civilized states today. The average criminal age is creeping alarmingly downward. For burglary it is twenty-one, for robbery, twenty-one, for hold-ups, twenty-one, for grand larceny, twenty-one, and for stolen vehicles, nineteen. Minors, yet criminals! Legally wards, yet violators of the law, taking the same rap as adults for law-violations!

More than that. These reckonings are based only on known violations, on public convictions in the courts. Caught in the act and convicted at nineteen—but what was before nineteen? Reliable researches show that the onset of crime takes place long before the violator is caught and convicted. Of all crimes committed, few are committed by first offenders. By far most crime is committed by confirmed criminals, ex-convicts and parolees; antisocial individuals whose real beginning of crime started at ten years of age.

Ponder the millennial vision of one single oncoming generation well-grounded in morals. As a nation we have much at stake because we are paying for immorality at the rate of $15,000,000,000 a year—so criminologists calculate—a staggering sum, five times our annual educational bill. Teaching morals to youth would save much of this huge crime cost. Yes, but more than that, it would lift sorrow out of homes, take remorse away from parents of prodigal sons, and wipe out the stigma of jailbirds for many, many people.

Who shall teach morals to youth? Obviously, the first line of instruction is in the home. Above all institutions the home promotes morality among its members. No homes want criminal members. But, even so, crime has increased, and the criminal age has crept down into the tender home years. The home influence is not enough. Many homes have suffered disruption and destruction at the hands of modern life. The urbanization of our life, modern industrialism, tenement torture, and the increase of divorce have all weakened the home. The direct correlation between early delinquency and increased divorce is ominously and definitely significant of a causal relation. Whatever strengthens the home life reduces crime and increases morality. More power to all forces buttressing the home! But the evidence so far shows that something more is needed to curb youthful criminal tendencies.

The church, so far as it goes, is a most powerful force against crime at all age levels. Juvenile judges unhesitatingly witness that few offenders come from good church backgrounds. Certain researches show that among solid church people the divorce rate drops from the average national rate of one in five to one in fifty. Make church influence substantially universal and our longed-for millennial vision will dawn! But note the limitations of the church. First, only half our population are nominally church people, and morality is a problem of the whole population. Secondly, about half our church people are but little if any different morally from non-church people. Third, church schools make little impact upon the total youth population. It is reported that there are 35,000,000 American youth under twenty-five nominally religious, either Protestant, Jewish, or Catholic, that are not enrolled in religious schools. There are only some 50,000,000 youth between the ages of five and twenty-five years. So far as it goes the church is a great moralizing force, but crime goes marching on roughshod, with too little effective opposition from the church.

The third and most potent cure for crime is to be found in the public school organization of the United States. Thirty million youth crowd our schools. Compulsory legislation keeps them coming there five days a week, forty weeks a year, until sixteen years of age with full option of free education until twenty or twenty-two. No other single social organization is fraught with so much potentiality for the morals of American youth. The home has all youth, of course, but homes are not organized for any joint action. Nor is the church really an organization so far as unified action is concerned. It is still but a loose accommodation to speak of all churches as one church. The school is more a single unified organization, touching more youth, more vitally, more hours of the youth's life during more years of his existence than any other one social organization of our culture. Does the school fulfil the responsibility which this possibility puts into its hands?

A strange and challenging correlation can be shown between increasing school costs in America and increasing crime costs. As schools have increased their scope, taking in more children at more ages, so also has the criminal age crept down into school years.

Public schools do much already to surround growing youth with healthful environment, sanitation, playgrounds, medical and dental attention, as well as skilled teaching. These all reduce juvenile delinquency. Increasing school months from nine to eleven months a year would help still more, cost the taxpayer but little, and would supply additional employment for members of the teaching profession now unemployed or employed less advantageously in fields outside their specialties.

Neither vital nor formal religion can be undertaken in the public school. By law the one text-book of religion, the Bible, is barred from being read publicly in the schools of a dozen states. Half a dozen other states permit it only if local public opinion demands it. In nineteen states the reading of the

ble is permitted in the schools ly by legal implication. Only a ant dozen states require the Bible be read in the schools.

At the same time great credit ust be given public school people r the development of citizenship d character. Their aggressive d scientific experimentation has lded much to the knowledge of aracter, its nature, its develop-ent, its relation to heredity and vironment. Building upon these ins, the public schools should in-oduce systematic courses for aching morals to youth.

Not theoretical ethics but prac-cal morals, the virtues that touch very-day life and conduct. Theo-tical ethics belong to the advanced udent in religion and philosophy. ractical morals are guides to daily ving. Every youngster faces de-sions in the field of practical orals every day of his life. He ay never have the measles, but e will daily encounter problems volving honesty. He may go rough the schools without need f dental attention, but he will not o through a single day of school fe without the need of orderliness, dustry, and loyalty. Even if the udent is so fortunate as never to ncounter a potential delinquent choolmate, he will still need self-ontrol, cheerfulness, and fair play. These, with courage, loyalty, gen-rosity, prudence, and conscien-ousness, make up a baker's dozen f virtues with which every indi-idual must deal during every wak-ng hour of his life from the age of esponsibility to death.

Failure to inculcate these virtues n the life of our youth is costing ne taxpayer a large part of his 15,000,000,000 crime bill. We annot say the state is unconcerned bout these practical morals. Our ounders well said that government annot exist without morality. It ay exist without religion and ithout much education, but not ithout morals. Vice is antisocial, nd it would be absurd to think hat teaching morals could con-ravene the law of the land. Rather, he law of the land demands moral-y and penalizes its absence.

From the view-point of practical administration, the teaching of morals to youth has several favorable features. First, the subject-matter lies ready at hand in every action of every responsible individual. It could be easily assembled and organized. Secondly, because it affects life so vitally at every age level, such a course would have dynamic teaching interest for every teacher and learning interest for every learner. It could hardly be an "unliked" course, detached from life, abstract, or frilly. Third, lessons in morality can be easily graded to suit the learning intelligence of various levels. Fourth, there is practically universal agreement on these dozen virtues named above. No one disputes their value. But they are not religious as such.

Most youth become criminal through ignorance rather than through native evil tendencies. The good life is attractive to them, and the way of the transgressor is early seen to be hard. Youth and education constitute the makings of our culture. What we want in the finished product we put into the process. When we want literacy, we teach. If we want morality, we must teach it. Punishing matured criminals will never do. Agonizing over the finished criminal product will not give us morality. These dozen virtues are not hard to teach, nor hard to learn. Yet they compass all the important factors of human conduct. Our public educators have accomplished far more stupendous tasks than the technical effort that would be involved in setting up a program to teach morals. But they have never undertaken any task more far-reaching in its potential effect upon all American life than would be involved in the sensible teaching of morals to our youth in the public schools of the United States.

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

(*Concluded from page 4*)

wild region between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea, in meditation for his great mission; he was to be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb; he was to go forth equipped in the spirit and power of Elijah.

He was a voice crying in the wilderness, but it was a mighty voice. Simplicity in dress and food marked his manner, humility his demeanor, and sincerity his spirit. He was, as Doctor Broaddus remarks, "the classical example of love in the garb of severity."

At times John the Baptist's messages scorched and burned the souls of those who heard them (Matt. 3:7-12); at other times tender utterances revealed his humility and charity (John 1:29-34). There are, too, passages that reveal his social implications (Luke 3).

In examining the content of the message of John the Baptist we find sin (John 1:29), repentance (Matt. 3:2), faith (Matt. 3:8), confession (Matt. 3:6), and the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 3:2).

John had the greatest privilege that can come to an individual on earth or in heaven—the privilege of introducing to the world the world's Saviour.

Belfrage, in Kitto's *Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature,* says: "In the splendor of Christ's great glory John was happy to be darkened, and in such fame he was content to be forgotten. Had his honors been ten thousand times brighter than they were he would have laid them all at Christ's feet. John in his ministry was not like the evening star, sinking into the darkness of night, but like the morning star, lost to our view in the brightness of the Day."

COMFORT FOR THE AUDITORIUM CLASS

By Jennie E. Stewart, Boulder, Colorado

IS your class one of those that has no other place for the lesson session than the church auditorium? Such classes labor under many disadvantages, but some of them can be overcome by a little careful planning and thinking.

Frequently the auditorium is used as a sort of passageway for latecomers, on their way to other parts of the building. This may in some cases be stopped by simply closing all doors but one and appointing an usher to wait on this door. If there are other means of passage which may be used, he should be instructed tactfully and pleasantly to show the would-be passer that other way.

The class is frequently disturbed by those who come early to church and drop into the auditorium during the lesson. Part of this annoyance can be handled by starting the lesson first and attending to offering, reports and distribution of papers after the lesson. The church ushers should be at the door to meet latecomers and advise them that the class is still in session, and show them quietly to seats in the rear so that there is no disturbance.

The class in the auditorium may be further safeguarded by selecting as compact a seating-place as possible. Even then, if the class is large, there is a possibility that those in the back seats will be unable to hear the teacher's voice. This may be helped by having two or three tall screens made. Place one across the back, just behind the last seat in use, and the other two at the sides of the class group. The voices within the class space will thus be confined fairly well within that space; you will find, too, that they are much more readily heard than where they echo through a large empty space.

Sometimes it is better to seat the class well back under, or partially under, a balcony. If they can all be accommodated under the balcony a curtain may be rolled down in front—one that can be readily rolled up again out of sight. Cloth screens are far more effective in preserving the volume of sound within the class enclosure than solid wood, or even paper. If an usher is appointed, one for each screen, the set-up and removal are simple matters. An interested class soon learns to listen only to their own teacher, and their own class speakers, if there is a reasonable separation.

With teen-age classes, looking around causes more distraction than even the voices of neighboring classes; and here curtains will be of use. The teacher should endeavor to seat boys and girls in a class so that they will not face "distractions."

It helps in a large class in a large auditorium if each speaker turns and faces the class when he speaks. His voice goes forward with the effort of speaking and those in the back hear him much better. Speakers in the rear should form the habit of going to the front if they have more than a few words to say.

You will find the members of your class far more interested if pains are taken to make the most of the situation than if you simply accept conditions as they are, believing that there is little that may be done about it.

PHILATHEA CLASS, FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, COFFEYVILLE, KANSAS

The group picture was taken on the occasion of a class homecoming last August. Many greetings were received from former members (the class was organized in 1910). It was decided to make this reunion an annual affair. The present enrolment is fifty-five. In the picture Mrs. Floyd Frazier, the president, is in the center, front row (with white hat). The vice-president, Ora Beeman, is at Mrs. Frazer's left. The teacher, Mrs. Frank Carrington, is last on front row (dark dress, white hat). A former teacher, Mrs. Walter Johnson, is third from right, front row. The pastor of the church, Rev. Elmer Kirkpatrick, will be seen in the back row (dark coat). Harry T. Bixby is the Sunday school superintendent

The Church and Young Adults

By Mabelle Venn Butler, Malden, Massachusetts

THE church is a fellowship of believers. It is made up of people mutually related because of their desire to worship God and acknowledge their allegiance to the principles of life taught by Jesus Christ. The church holds the answer to the world's needs. The church should attract and stimulate the intelligence of all people.

The church edifice is erected to house a group of people as they worship God. It may be a great city temple or a humble meeting-house. The service for worship includes music, Scripture reading, prayer, and a sermon, which is an exposition of religious truth. The music may be rendered by a vested choir, faithfully and artistically trained; by a professional music-teacher; or a group of conscientious folks may sit together to use what voices they have in the praise of God. The preacher may pour out his soul in a message clothed with passion and power and rich with scholarly content, making God and his laws real to the people, or he may speak a simple message of trust and saving hope.

The great temple and the meeting-house are both less than half-filled. Where are the crowds that were milling through the down-town streets and jamming the stores with busy shoppers only the day before? Where are the parents of the young folks that crowd the schools? Where are the politicians and the men and women who are responsible for the affairs of civic order and betterment? If these are not there, what is the reason? Can it be possible that the services lack what they need? Can it be possible that the minister, the choir and the faithful attendants are at fault for the absence of these people? If they are not in this service, are they in the church school at its Sunday session? If they come to the church worship service, do they attend also the school session?

These are searching questions. Each has a revealing answer that should result in intelligent change. By far the largest class included in this searching is that intermediate group between the young people in school and the "fathers and mothers in Israel." We call them "young adults." Here we find young women and men, young parents, sweethearts, teachers, students, business clerks and executives, property-owners, government officials, politicians, lawyers, physicians, men and women out of steady employment, some of them graduates and trained for professions and positions. How can these persons and the church be brought together in intimate camaraderie? Who shall bring them together?

1. *Ourselves.* Until we who profess to be Christian, who attend the various services of the church and are busy with its appointments, until *we* are more Christian in character, sweeter in disposition, more honest in word and dealings, until we are, when out of church, what we profess to be when in church, we are no different from those who make no profession. The fact is, we are more to blame than they, for we are ministers, deacons, deaconesses, teachers, officials, members, and attendants in the church of God. We invite outsiders to come with us and be like us. Maybe they would rather not do either. Let us take honest account of ourselves. Are we what we profess to be? Are we what we wish another to become? Unless the Christ we profess to love makes us lovely and attractive, who wants to love him? Unless the creeds and theologies we profess to believe make us intelligent and tolerant, who wants to believe them?

2. *Our Church.* How can we align the young adults of our congregation to the program of our church? A study should be made of the membership-lists of all organizations of the church and church school. It will become apparent that there is a surprisingly large group of young adults, both women and men, who are in no way affiliated with the actual functioning families of the church. These, then, are prospects for membership in the group appropriate to their age and condition. When the women's society or federation is in the process of building committees for the new year, one or more of the young women of this list should be placed on each committee. Likewise, the men's brotherhood, or federation, should absorb the new young men. Objections may be raised by these prospects, excusing themselves from accepting such appointments. These objections may be well grounded. It may be possible that the men's and women's groups have behaved in a manner that has excluded these folks. It may be that there are injured feelings or imagined wrongs. Possibly misunderstandings have grown because of careless planning or thoughtless exclusion. It may take patient persistence, gracious hospitality, and repeated wise approaching before the prospects are willing to believe or able to see that they are really wanted, or desire really to belong. The first to join will soon be the best influence for the winning of the others.

A similar method should be followed by classes in the church school where these young adults belong. The official family of the church should share responsibility and honor by adding to its rosters younger men and women capable of growing into places of leadership.

In all this adjustment, four important matters are basic:

1. *Preparedness.* Before a society, class, or group of any kind can thus enlarge its membership, strengthen its usefulness, and increase its capacity it must convert its existing membership to the reasonableness and necessity of the plan. To be a gracious hostess is the first requisite of a homemaker who wishes strangers to enjoy the

beauty, comfort and friendliness of her home. Each member of any group is first a host to a newcomer. When a visitor feels at home, he responds to sharing any responsibilities that may include him. Each member needs to examine himself in the light of the truth revealed in the paragraph *"Ourselves."*

2. *Alert Thoughtfulness.* After these new members are added to a group they feel at home only as they are made to feel they "belong." They must be included in the planning processes, their counsel must be sought, responsibilities must be assigned to them, and they should be enlightened as to the background and aims of the group or position.

Constant eternal vigilance must be kept for strangers who come into the church services. Ushers, teachers, members of the diaconate, especially, should be keen in seeing "a great way off," and get names and addresses as well as give a welcome. These names should be given to the pastor and to a representative of the group to which the stranger may be eligible. Then the group follows the lead, and a new friend is made for the church, and a heart is warmed and won closer to Christ.

3. *Creativeness.* It may be discovered that the reason some of these young adults do not attend the Sunday session of the church school is that there is no place for them in the program. It becomes necessary to build one or more new classes. To organize a class and then hunt frantically for a teacher is to build a beautiful automobile without an engine. This otherwise well-equipped car is an anomaly and is useless for the purpose for which it was intended. As soon as the vision catches a prospective class, the first thing to do is not to organize but to secure a teacher. This may not be an easy task. Here let us read from Article III, Section 1, of the constitution and by-laws of a class of young adults, men and women:

The Teacher. The teacher shall conduct the regular lesson period of the class and have charge of all other agencies of religious instruction. The teacher and president together shall make plans, draft workers and direct activities. It is essential that the teacher shall be a sincere Christian, who through training and experience realizes the great responsibility of this position; a person who is intellectually alive, who is devoted to the truth before God, and whose personal touch is quickening and ennobling. The teacher shall bear the same relation to the class as the pastor to the church.

4. *Classes.* Four types of classes are possible: (1) A class of young women. (2) A class of young men. (3) A class of young married couples. (4) A class of young adults, with open membership for men and women, married and single. All four groups should make reasonable age adjustments at both ends, though twenty-four to thirty-six is the approximate age of young adults. Our leaders in educational research and planning have divided life into ages of development corresponding to the biological changes in the human personality. According to this sane system, a person is an adult when he reaches twenty-four years of age—whether he likes it or not. Many have grown into adulthood younger than this. At just what age the word "young" should be omitted these educators do not say. Good reason—they do not know—neither do we. Suffice to say, there comes a time in life's growing processes when a person does not belong in a class of young adults. Persons should recognize this themselves and naturally and properly of their own volition join the next age-class group, thus keeping the class of young adults free from embarrassment to the younger folks who enter at the other end.

Caution is needed in forming the third group—a class of young married couples. The very exclusiveness of such a group is apt to cause problems instead of solving them.

Group four, a class of young adults with open membership for all interests, has proved itself to be a problem solver and a place of happy relationships. Here young women, sweethearts, friends, husbands and wives, parents may study together, practice together, play together. Such a group is a class in homecraft and leadership education. It increases friendships, enlarges activities, stimulates right thinking, and builds noble Christian character in the normal relationships of life. Its committees and offices are served by either young women or young men, so that both have a share in executive capacity. The Sunday lessons and week-day activities are broader and richer because they must include the point of view and need of both women and men.

There should be no conflict between this class and any other group, because each has its very definite place in the general curriculum and each meets an urgent need. Each group should very happily acknowledge all other groups.

Conclusion

By thus weaving young adults into the great tapestry of church fellowship we have produced a society patterned after the teaching of our Master Teacher when he pictured the kingdom of God. Thus may a church be free from pettiness, from officialism, from self-satisfaction, and from problems that irk her peace.

LETTING THEM ESCAPE

A prominent director of religious education has been much disturbed by the indifference of parents who let any small matter break into the regularity of their children's attendance at church school. He referred to letting them "escape the experience" of attendance. Then in a personal message he addressed these strong words to them:

"These youngsters need religious training just as much as—and more, I think—than the day-school kind.

"Bring your boy and girl next Sunday. Bring them *every* Sunday. Let them stay the whole period through. What if this does delay an hour or two the Sunday picnic or the drive in the hills?

"Not for my sake, not for the sake of the officers and teachers who give their time so faithfully to the work of the school, but simply and only that these boys and girls may grow to better manhood and womanhood, I ask your thoughtful consideration of this message, and your better cooperation."—*The International Journal of Religious Education.*

What Baptists Believe

By Francis Carr Stifler, D. D.

(The following is an excerpt from "Better Baptist Churches," one of the Publication Society's recent publications)

AT the root of Baptist beliefs is that of the competency of the ıman soul in its dealing with God. very man is a priest in his own ght. Among Baptists there are gradations of Christians. There e no intermediaries to whom the ul must appeal in its search for od.

Growing directly out of this has en the Baptist insistence that ırist is the Head of the church. aptists have been literalists at this oint. All Christians, of course, old such a doctrine in name, but aptists have always contended at popes and conclaves, bishops d conventions, presbyteries and semblies, conferences and dis-plines have so complicated the ear commands of Christ as to lead e body of believers into many of e tragic vagaries that have arked Christian history.

Baptists, then, have come to look on their fellowship as a spiritual mocracy, with no authority ex-pt for its own preservation. ney have never been persecutors, r they claim no power beyond at of expelling from their midst ose who offend. There are leaders ly chosen by the congregation, t they hold no personal power er their fellow members. Bap-ts entertain no thoughts of a na-onal church. Among Baptists the cal church is the final court of peal. There is no such body as e Baptist Church. There are only aptist churches. Our Southern others are consistent in calling ose who are sent to their annual nvention "messengers" rather an delegates, for delegate is a ord that seems to imply the exis-nce of ecclesiastical authority. ır fathers liked to call their place worship the meeting-house, to oid the very use of the word urch with its ecclesiastical con-tations.

Baptists have further staked eir lives on the conviction that baptism, being the symbol of a redeemed life, should be administered to believers only. This lies deeper in Baptist thinking than does insistence upon a mode of baptism.

Baptists have been historically opponents of the union of church and state. So completely have they carried their point in this matter in the United States that this tenet now seems to belong to all American Protestantism. The principle is of course a direct outgrowth of the deeper beliefs regarding the nature of church membership and the competence of the human soul in relation to God.

Baptists have always been social radicals. In the early days of the movement out of which they grew their spiritual progenitors were essentially communists in their economic practices; they were pacifists, and they were separatists. To this day they are the pronounced foes of many of the great social abuses, like intemperance, divorce, gambling, Sabbath desecration, and excess in amusements and recreation. In times like ours, when many social abuses have crept boldly into the ranks of the Christian churches, it will be found that Baptist pulpits and Baptist congregations are strongly and actively opposed to drinking, playing the races, Sunday sports, and the like. Although official discipline in Baptist, as in most Protestant churches, is seldom practised, the member who indulges in loose practices usually expels himself.

Naturally, Baptists, have never formulated a creed; and yet they appear to have as much in common with one another as other fellowships that have wrought elaborate ecclesiastical bonds about themselves.

HOW COME?

By David Ferris Kirby, Port Chester, N. Y.

Yo' doan' believe in God?
Hesh up yore noise, ole man,
An' tell me 'bout a few ob dese
Essamples, ef yo' can.

Now, whut made Noah take
An' build hisself a ark
Widout he heard de voice ob God
Afore it got so dark?

An' how come Dan'l sot
An' stared de lions out ob face,
Widout he had de help ob God
An' his redeemin' grace?

An' whut made Peter 'lent,
Fer cussin' 'bout de Lawd?
An' why did Judas gib 'em back
De whole ob his reward?

Yo' knows yo' can't essplain
Dis uniberse ob strife,
Widout yo' makes de lub of God
De center ob yore life.

Drinking and Our Example

Henry Ward Beecher was once asked to explain his position on the use of intoxicating liquors by Christians. He replied thus: "It is just like this. Suppose there is a precipice out by a schoolhouse, where many children are assembled. Suppose that half-way down the precipice there is a spring that I especially enjoy, and, strong man that I am, I can go down safely, by a narrow path, dangerous to many, but not to me. Suppose that the children are determined to go down there after me, and will not believe that the path is dangerous since they see me tread it with impunity. Some of them that try it fall and break their necks and others are maimed for life. Now, what sort of a man—much more, what sort of a Christian—should I be if, under those circumstances, I persist in going down that dangerous path? Nay, verily, I shall put a good, strong fence across that path, and never tread it any more."

From the Director's Desk

By Ulyss Stanford Mitchell, M. A., Th. D.

Director of Social and Adult Education

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN SOCIAL EDUCATION?

THE Social Education Division is in the Department of Christian Education of The American Baptist Publication Society. It is a recognized agency of the Northern Baptist Convention.

The chief responsibility of social education is to interpret evangelical Christianity in terms of modern life relationships, or to define the Christian ethic in human affairs. We believe that the gospel is sufficiently powerful to emancipate the total person, and that commitment to Christ as Saviour and Lord is essential to an adequate understanding of the Christian faith, or the will to practise its principles.

The church is today facing an unprecedented opportunity to prove the workability of its faith. To fail in our ministration to the exploited, underprivileged victims of an uncontrolled industrial order is to fail Christ.

It is our aim in Christian Social Education: (1) To teach Christians right conduct in all relationships with others; in the home, church, business, community and world. (2) To provide information on social issues for individuals and groups as a basis for intelligent judgment and action. (3) To reaffirm the great historic principles for which Baptists have stood through the centuries.

We are committed to a positive and constructive teaching emphasis, life with the mind and spirit of seeking to permeate all spheres of Christ. We are committed to a peaceful, non-violent correction of existing evils, and uncompromisingly oppose the doctrine of force and violence inherent in Marxianism, Fascism, Naziism, exploitative economics, or any other system or philosophy that advocates or condones unchristian means of attaining its ends. We are committed to Jesus in government and business.

CHRIST AND SOCIAL CHANGE. By Joseph Martin Dawson. x and 222 pages. Price, $1.50.

Nothing is more important just now than that Christian people shall clearly understand the meaning and implications of Jesus' gospel for the pronounced changes that are taking place in society and government. In this book Doctor Dawson aims to help us to such an understanding. He knows his Bible, but he knows too what is going on in the world. His reading, on all sides of all social questions, has been wide and up-to-date. He is fearless, sometimes perhaps radical, but always sane and fair, because he keeps close to Jesus' teachings. Significant chapters are: "The Loss and Recovery of the Social Hope"; "Can We Get Christ Into the Economic Order?" "Social Attitudes that Hurt or Help"; "Can the Christian Family Endure?" "Can the Church Stop War?" In this book Baptists are making a contribution to the literature of Social Christianity similar to that they made a quarter of a century ago in the writings of Walter Rauschenbusch, Shailer Mathews and Samuel Zane Batten. It might well be remembered for collateral reading in connection with the courses in Christian service and Social Christianity at assemblies and conferences and in leadership-training classes.

SCHOOLS OF CHRISTIAN LIVING AND LOCAL CHURCHES

By Frederick Erdman Smith, LL. D., Minister of the Austin Baptist Church, Chicago

SCHOOLS of Christian Living are to be conducted throughout the nation as a sequel to the Preaching Mission of last year. Every pastor will immediately ask himself how these schools may be related to the work and life of the local church, so that the church, rather than only the representatives who attend the schools, may be enriched. Having given much thought to this matter, I am happy on the request of the Social and Adult Education Divisions of The American Baptist Publication Society to outline the program that has been adopted for the Chicago Baptist Association through the Committee on Evangelism and Missions, of which I happen to be chairman.

1. It is our plan to secure a list of all members of the local church with addresses, as nearly accurate as possible, together with a list of prospective members and by means of direct mail, visits, announcements and posters to advertise the School of Christian Living in the area for the church concerned. Special emphasis will be placed upon securing leaders and prospective leaders in the different organizations of the church as attendants at the school. Preliminary meetings will be held with a view to stressing the importance of the school, the plan of operation, and

e necessity of each attendant's nging back to the church the st he has learned in the school.

2. Representatives of the local urch are to observe not only the ntent of the addresses and dis-ssions at the schools, but also to te closely the methods of pro-dure, especially those employed nich seem to be most effective. ne purpose of this is, of course, bring back information about ese methods with a view to set-ng up in the local church a similar chnique, so that the main import the program of the school may placed before the membership, rticularly leaders and officers.

3. The representatives of the cal church will attend the school, ving been assigned beforehand e task of assuming the leadership their church in doing a similar ork. It is believed that this ad-nce assignment of the task to be ne locally will stimulate the rep-sentatives to be alert in getting ery feature that would be most lpful in bringing in the spirit and ocedures of the school.

4. As to means of projecting to the life and work of the local urch the value of the school, it is roposed to use the different or-nizations separately, and also to ve meetings of all in one group. is further planned to set apart a eek for a Church Institute, fol-wing the Schools in Christian ving. This plan has been adopted the Chicago Baptist Association.

5. It is to be urged that all pro-dures, effective techniques, and lues of both the general school ld within the area of the local urch and the institute be kept as record which may be of signifi-nce in building future programs. Finally it is hoped that as inter-ts and information are developed hich may be of special value to rtain aspects or divisions of the ork, such as the Sunday church hool, the women's society, the gh school department, these re-ective organizations may find a ace, and time, to use these ideas the remainder of their 1937-38 ogram. They may devote their gular period to such discussions d the formulating of programs of action; or, if desired, extra time may be allowed.

The Church Institute, mentioned above, may give emphasis to the phases of Christian living thought most essential within the particular church. In the main, however, it should be the purpose, "To interpret our faith in terms of personal and social needs, giving special attention to observance of the Christian ethic in relation to vital issues of today."[1]

Nota bene these new books:

PEACE—IN THESE TIMES. The Judson Press. Price, 25 cents. Presents four services of worship and discussion on the war question. Well suited to any adult or youth group stressing peace.

CHRIST AND SOCIAL CHANGE. By Joseph Martin Dawson, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Waco, Texas. The Judson Press. Price, $1.50. A candid analysis of Christ's teaching relative to issues involving human relations.

CHURCH AND STATE, and BILLIONS FOR DEFENSE. By the Foreign Policy Association. Price, 25 cents each.

PHILIPPINE OPPOSITION TO MILITARISM

More than thirty thousand young men have been arrested throughout the Philippine Islands and charged before the courts for their refusal to register for military training under the so-called National Defense Act, drafted by Gen. Douglas MacArthur, military adviser to President Manuel L. Quezon. The provincial jails are crowded with these prisoners, and other places had to be fitted to accommodate them. The problem of feeding them has become so perplexing to the local governments that Secretary of the Interior Elpidio Quirino issued orders to stop the arrests.

Under the National Defense Act an army of 400,000 men is to be organized in ten years, and compulsory military training has been introduced. The young people from the outset showed themselves reluctant to undergo military instruction in the training-camps. In Mindanao, Moros have revolted in opposition to compulsory military training.

Desertions *en masse* from the training-camps have also taken place recently. More than nine hundred trainees left three camps—which gives some idea of the strength of the movement. All these arrests and desertions show the stubborn opposition which the Quezon-MacArthur militarization program is meeting. Discontent engendered by these and other policies is spreading among the masses.

[1] Statement of purpose for Baptist Schools in Christian Living throughout the Northern Baptist Convention. For further details write the Director.

THE PARTNERSHIP-PLANNED SERMON

The conscientious minister seeks to deal effectively with various controversial social issues in which differing view-points are represented in his church and community. It is suggested that he call into consultation and discussion a carefully selected committee, representing different points of view, for the purpose of working out jointly with the pastor a partnership sermon. In the sermon the pastor will seek to correlate points of view and present the considered judgments pro and con. The conclusion may represent his own views, or mutual points of agreement. Following the sermon the committee might continue to meet for discussion and planning, if the sermon is sufficiently suggestive of a program of action. This has been tried in many churches, and on one occasion was carried on simultaneously with all the Protestant churches of the town—six churches in all—on the question of labor and capital. The "partnership plan" correlates the spiritual idealism of the minister and the practical experience of the laity. It removes some of the criticism that in speaking on economic questions the minister goes out of his field and is uninformed about his subject-matter. It helps uncover facts for intelligent social action. This procedure also commends itself to teaching or discussion outlines and procedures.

Recent Books

ACHIEVING CHRISTIAN CHARACTER. By Frances Cole McLester. Cokesbury Press. 160 pages. Price, 60 cents.

Miss McLester is well known to workers in the field of Christian education as the author of textbooks which are different on account of the vivid way in which they dramatize the newer educational developments. Here the dramatic element, while reduced in amount, is again utilized effectively to arouse interest and to make clear and impressive the outworking of educational principles in daily life. While the author is deeply religious, and believes that Christian character can be achieved only by cooperation with the Spirit of God, she does not depend upon a series of miracles to make up for our ignorance of the laws of character-growth. The book is at once a scientific and common-sense effort to elucidate these laws and their application to every-day people in every-day situations. Fresh light is thrown upon the factors of heredity and environment, and what is meant by character. The learning process; the place of information and knowledge; education with reference to the emotions and the making of choices; the evaluation of character, and respect for personality are discussed with clarity and a surprising amount of detail in view of the limited size of the book. It is an important contribution to the study of character education, a subject that continues to attract increasing attention both within and without the church.

HIGHLAND HERITAGE: THE SOUTHERN MOUNTAINS AND THE NATION. By Edwin E. White. Friendship Press. 1937. 197 pages. Price, cloth, $1.00; paper, 60 cents.

Mr. White, who has devoted many years to Christian work among the mountain people, discusses thoughtfully the new conditions which are bringing the dwellers of Appalachia so rapidly out of their isolation. Old folkways are disappearing, but new evils are making their appearance. Crushing poverty as well as physical handicaps must be overcome. If a healthy rural life is to be developed, education, social service and medical care must each do its part. Most important of all is the church. How the churches beyond the mountains can aid through a sharing of money, leadership, cooperation, and friendliness is clearly shown.

MORE SOURCES OF POWER IN FAMOUS LIVES! By Walter C. Erdman. Cokesbury Press. 1937. 160 pages. Price, $1.00.

This companion volume to *Sources of Power in Famous Lives* contains two dozen biographical sketches of pleasing variety. The sketches are alike, however, in this: they reveal the sources of power which their subjects touched—sources of power which enabled them to accomplish the well-nigh impossible. These sources, as the author clearly shows, are open to us, and this fact gives the book its inspirational character. Ministers and teachers will find in it a treasure-house of telling illustrations.

THE JOURNEY OF THE CHRIST CHILD. By Madeleine S. Miller. Fleming H. Revell Company. 31 pages. Price, 75 cents.

A little travel-story that becomes a Christmas story. A young college professor and his wife take the Mediterranean trip. On the way from Egypt up to Jerusalem the wife follows in a dream the flight into Egypt of Mary, Joseph and the Child. Then the couple spend Christmas in Bethlehem. The Gospel narrative is not violated, as it is likely to be with such stories, and it makes a pleasing, pretty holiday gift-booklet.

TEXTILE DESIGN. By Antony Hunt. The Studio. 1937. 80 pages. Price, $3.50.

Although this newest addition to the "How to Do It" series of books is aimed to advise artists considering work in the textile field, the general reader will be interested in the information it offers concerning the processes involved in the production of beautiful fabrics. In the last pages is a valuable classification of fabrics with an explanation of how each is woven. The numerous plates illustrating designs, processes, and finished textiles, are handsome and instructive.

PEACE—IN THESE TIMES. The "Living Issues" Series. The Judson Press. 1937. 47 pages. Price 25 cents.

Today we in the United States are spectators of an international drama. Crisis after crisis seemingly brings us closer to the brink of disaster. Must these tragic events run their relentless course until the curtain goes down on darkness? Is there no alternative? We must answer. This study on the causes of war and the way to peace will serve its purpose only if it arouses Christian people to peace—in these times. *Peace—In These Times* is the first of a series of discussions similar to this.

POETRY ARRANGED FOR THE SPEAKING CHOIR. By Marion Parsons Robinson and Rozetta Lura Thurston. Expression Company, Boston. 1936. 405 pages. Price, $2.50.

The speaking choir is "a balanced group of voices speaking poetry and other rhythmic literature, with a unity and beauty born of thinking and feeling as one." How such a choir may be organized, how it should be rehearsed and many other such matters are set forth in clear and adequate fashion. A large section of the book is devoted to poems suited to choric speech, many of them religious. Each poem is annotated, and marked to show how it may be used.

Lesson Topics for February

Feb. 6. CHALLENGING THE SOCIAL ORDER.—Mark 2: 13-22.

Feb. 13. CONSERVING THE SABBATH FOR MAN.—Mark 2: 23 to 3:

Feb. 20. CHOOSING COMPANIONSI N SERVICE.—Mark 3: 7-19, 31-3

Feb. 27. MEASURING A MAN'S WORTH —Mark 5: 1-17.

International Sunday School Lessons

(Improved Uniform Series)

First Quarter, 1938: The Gospel of Service; According to Mark

AIM. To lead the student to appreciate how Jesus in his life and teachings emphasized service to all men; to help the student to devote his life to the task of building a new world in accordance with the ideals of our Lord.

These lessons are developed from outlines prepared by the Committee on Improved Uniform Lessons of the International Council. The outlines are copyrighted, 1936, by the International Council of Religious Education and are used by permission.

LESSON I. JANUARY 2

MARK'S GOSPEL: AUTHOR, ORIGIN, THEME

Mark 10: 35-45

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Isaiah 42: 1-8

KEY VERSE: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.—Mark 10: 44

35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.

41 And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Seeking Empty Honors. Mark 10: 35-40. Find out what's inside of any honor before you covet it or strive for it. Does it make for righteousness, for yourself and others? Some honors are worse than empty.

Tuesday. The Royalty of Service. Mark 10: 41-45. The Black Prince adopted as his motto, as a sign of his fealty to his father, Edward III, *"Ich dien* (I serve)." Can the words express our fealty to Christ?

Wednesday. The Greatest in the Kingdom. Luke 22: 24-30. Jesus turned pots of things upside down, revalued many old values. To follow him you'll have to think differently and do differently—be different.

Thursday. A Mother's Mistaken Ambition. Matt. 20: 20-23. How many Christian mothers there are who are making this same mistake; ambitious for their boys to become famous or rich, but careless of their spiritual advancement!

Friday. A Laudable Ambition. Phil. 3: 8-16. It's a big ideal that the apostle was trying to realize; but that's the advantage of imitating Christ, for he sums up all that is ideally worth while in character and life.

Saturday. Our Supreme Example. John 13: 6-17. The fault of the old-fashioned copy-books was that the pupil would pretty regularly copy the line he had just written, instead of the perfect one at the top of the page. Don't take your eyes off Christ!

Sunday. God's Servant. Isa. 42: 1-8. "My servant, whom I uphold," embodies a great Old Testament and New Testament faith; that when a man makes himself God's servant, he may rely on God's backing. Think how it was with Paul, who was so fond of calling himself "servant."

At the Threshold of the Lesson

The word "gospel" in the New Testament never means a written document, but always the message of salvation (cf. "the gospel of the grace of God," Acts 20: 24; "that the truth of the gospel might continue with you," Gal. 2: 5). There is one gospel; the Gospels are four different presentations of it.[1]

There has been much conjecture as to the origin of the Gospels, and many theories have been advanced. Formerly it was supposed that the material they embody was handed down orally; but now the documentary theory is generally accepted; that is, that Jesus' immediate followers committed to writing his important sayings and many facts of his life and ministry. Christianity, notice, had its beginnings in a writing age.

This material ultimately grouped itself into two collections, the basic Mark, and the "Sayings" (sometimes designated by the Greek word *logia,* or by the letter "L," or the letter "Q"). The apostle Matthew will have collected the Sayings, and later have combined them with narratives into what we know as the Gospel of Matthew. Our Gospel of Mark is longer than what we have called the basic Mark; it is supposed that its author gave it its final revision at Rome, somewhere about A. D. 65-70.

Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels, because they are in many respects alike, parallel, "can be looked at together." Luke tells us that they were not the only ones, that when he made his Gospel many such collections of gospel material were in existence. We believe that the Holy Spirit effected a survival of the fittest of them. Christians may sometimes wish that they had more of Jesus' words and more information about him; the Spirit, however, knew best, knew just what we would need "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3: 16).

The Gospels were not written, primarily, for outsiders, but for the disci-

[1] This distinction is carried out in our printing-house rule to capitalize the word "Gospel" when it refers to the book of the New Testament, but to use a small "g" when it means the message.

ples themselves; to help them "remember the words of the Lord Jesus," to satisfy the natural curiosity of new converts, and to have written memorabilia that they could use in their preaching and teaching. A message of Jesus', or an incident of his ministry, will have been given the form it has in the Gospels to a particular audience or situation ("Formgeschichte").

The Lesson Before Us

I. The Gospel of Mark: the Author

The text itself tells us nothing about the Gospel's origin; yet the oldest manuscripts have the caption, "according to Mark." The Christian church has always accepted the very old tradition that it is also according to Peter; that is, that Mark was what we would call Peter's "ghost-writer."

Eusebius quotes the church father Papias (lived about A. D. 125) as saying: "Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately everything that he (Peter) remembered, without, however, recording in order what was either said or done by Christ."

Yet Mark must have had a first-hand and intimate knowledge of some of the events which he narrates. Anyhow, he would wish to check up by Peter. Then too, Peter's word and authority were now weighty in the church, while Mark was a leader of only secondary importance.

We take the Mark of the Gospel to be the John Mark mentioned in Acts. His mother was an influential member of the Jerusalem church, her house being the place where prayer was made for Peter and to which he went upon his release (Acts 12:12). He was Barnabas' "sister's son" (Col. 4:10), and he accompanied Barnabas and Paul on the first missionary journey. While he disappointed Paul by turning back—at Perga (Acts 15:39)—we find him nine years later the apostle's welcome and faithful companion during his imprisonment at Rome (Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11). We like to identify Mark with the young man, whom he doesn't name, who followed Jesus out from Gethsemane when the others "all forsook him and fled" (Mark 14:51).

II. A Petrine Gospel

In connection with Peter's presence in his aunt's home, and Papias' remark quoted above, it is interesting to find Mark with that apostle at Rome in the closing days of his life (1 Peter 5:13). As for Peter's part in the making of the Gospel M. W. Jacobus says: (It) "is a reproduction of the common apostolic preaching in the early church, based, perhaps, in general on Peter's presentation of it, but at the same time modified by his (Mark's) own wider experiences in company with Paul."

Our Gospel reflects the sanguine and impulsive temperament, the rapid movement and vigorous action of Simon Peter. Its favorite particle is "straightway" (used forty-two times). Its point of view is that of one of the Twelve. We would see Peter's "hand" in its omission of some things creditable to him (as given in Matt. 16:16-19), and the inclusion of other things not creditable (Mark 8:33; 14:30, 68-72).

III. Purpose and Characteristics

Mark gives every evidence of having been written originally in Greek (and not being a translation from the Aramaic, as is now sometimes claimed). It is steeped in Semitism. Its writer is bilingual. He is a Jew, and a Christian, out in the Greco-Roman world. His Gospel is intended especially for Gentiles, and so contains just about what a missionary would be expected to relate of Jesus to people to whom it was all new, a good *news.*

The language is direct, simple, vivid, picturesque (cf. the Feeding of the Five Thousand and the parable of the Soils taken over by Matthew and Luke). Mark tells what Jesus did, and not, like Matthew, what he said. He records nineteen miracles and only four parables. He presents "a striking and realistic picture of Jesus at work among the people—teaching, healing, helping" (*The Study Bible*).

IV. Structure

The following general analysis of Mark is taken from Bundy's *Syllabus and Synopsis of the First Three Gospels:*

A. The Account of Jesus' Public Career; chapters 1-15.
  I. The Galilean Period, 1-9.
  II. The Judean Period, 10-15.
    1. The Journey to Jerusalem, 10.
    2. The Jerusalem Days, 11-13.
    3. The Story of the Passion, 14, 15.

B. The Reports of the Resurrection, chapter 16.
  I. The Witness of the Women, 16:1-8.
  II. The Appearances to the Disciples, 16:9-20.

V. "The Scripture Printed" Mark 10:35-45

The Gospel's "entire contents might be summed up in these words, 'To minister and to give His life'" (Erdman). "The chief purpose of (this) Gospel is to portray the personality of Jesus in such a way that the church in the hour of its severe trial would receive power to endure and remain faithful; (for) Mark was writing for days that tried men's souls" (*The Abingdon Commentary*).

This aspect and theme of the Gospel are well illustrated by Jesus' reply to James and John here in our Scripture for the day. They are ambitious. That was praiseworthy, for it was an ambition to be high up with him, in his Kingdom. The Master does not seem to have shared the indignation of the Ten (vs. 41).

But they must understand what it means to be high up with him, to have honor-seats by his side. It means to serve, as he was—is—always doing; it means to give one's life in service—perhaps only in a limited sense—as he was giving himself without limit. Whether or not Jesus means "cup" and "baptism" literally like his own, Mark and all those first disciples learned full well what greatness in his Kingdom implies (vs. 39). Notice that Jesus never foretold his sufferings without likewise foretelling his resurrection victory, nor this victory without mentioning the cross.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ Most Bible readers have a favorite Gospel. What is yours?

¶ Can you mention incidents or sayings in Mark's Gospel that would suggest the appropriateness of the lion's being his symbol, as the eagle is John's?

¶ Can you explain why the epistles of the New Testament are older than the Gospels?

¶ In what senses do you use the expression, "Christian service"?

¶ When is ambition to rank high in Christ's Kingdom praiseworthy—and when not?

¶ When is the pastor of a church truly its minister? Then should not all the members be also its ministers? How do you use the verb "minister"?

Notes and Comments

Adam of St. Victor, the greatest Latin poet of the Middle Ages (about 1172) made the four evangelists the subject of a musical poem. These lines are from Plumtre's translation:

Though one set of facts is stated,
They by each one are related
In a manner all his own.

. . . . . .

Mark, the lion, his voice upraises,
Crying out in desert places:
"Cleanse your hearts from all
sin's traces;
For our God a way prepare!"

Traditions of the early church associate Mark, toward the close of his life, with Alexandria. He is said to have been bishop or elder of the church there; perhaps its founder. In 827 his supposed remains were removed from Egypt to Venice. A century and a half later the city built for him a magnificent cathedral, and made his symbol, the lion, their patron saint. Rebuilt, the church is now

chief adornment of the famous Piazza Saint Mark, and one of the most iliar sights in the world to the trav- g public.

lement of Alexandria relates that the people (Christians?) of Rome were so much pleased with Peter's preaching about Christ that they requested Mark to commit as much of it as he could to writing.

Mark wrote for non-Jews. He explains references they probably would not understand.

SUGGESTION

Read the book through at one sitting; you will enjoy it!

Teachers' Helps

In the Men's Class

harles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

HE GOSPEL OF MARK: A PREVIEW

NTLEMEN:

Ve have before us an intellectual and itual treat. For the first half of the r 1938 we are to consider the life of us as recorded in the Gospel according Mark. The aim will be "to lead the lent to appreciate how Jesus in his life teachings emphasized service to all ; to help the student to devote his life he task of building a new world in ac- dance with the ideals of our Lord." s gospel is great for that purpose. It been called "the layman's gospel." h it is.

Jo doubt you have noticed the sharp, ppy, bristling character of this ap- ling book. I have before me an India er edition of the American Revision mmittee (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1). Matthew with 28 chapters covers pages; Mark with 16 chapters covers ½ pages; Luke, 24 chapters and 35½ es. Of all the material presented by three Synoptic Gospels, Mark con- s only 23.6 percent. But it is good f!

t is very obviously directed to non- vish readers. Mark tells us more ut the deeds of Jesus than about his ings. He "wades right in." Mark es a large place to his mighty works. exhibits him "energizing." He shows how Jesus used his miraculous power how that power was felt and recog- ed by different classes. How the ltitudes believed in it and accordingly ught their sick to him, confident that n his touch would be enough for their ling (Hastings).

The author of this book uses only r or five hundred words to get him- squared away to present an account Jesus' dealing with the "man with an lean spirit." What follows is accepted many students as being presented in *onological* order by an accurate an- st. "Mark, so far as *logical* order is cerned, is the most unsystematic of evangelists, showing little of the ver of historical grouping which is so ernible in Matthew" (A. H. Strong). rk seems not to have been concerned n orienting the acts of Jesus to He- w custom and tradition. He felt that recital of the astounding and chal- ging deeds of the Son of man would Gentiles to his fold. When he ught it necessary, he explained Jewish oms and terms to his (Gentile) readers. For example, read 7:3; 15:42; 12:42—"two mites which make a farthing." As said above, the book is full of action.

Have you ever thought of the immense amount of material packed into Mark's sixteen chapters? Here is a brief biography of Jesus. John the Baptist baptizes Jesus . . . the disciples find the tomb empty. Think of the numbers of books written on the life of Christ; and the length of some of them. In the case of Mark, how familiar he is with the ministry of the Lord whom he would glorify and honor. Where did this man Mark get his information?

Mark is one of the lesser characters of the New Testament. He appears with Barnabas and Saul at Jerusalem some fifteen or sixteen years after the day of Pentecost. He travels with them. In Acts 13:13, we read that Mark (John, as he is there called) left the party. Paul later refers to this as a desertion. Barnabas quarrels ("differs" would be a better word) with Paul about this and takes Mark on a trip. Later, however, Paul and Mark were reconciled. F. H. Chase, in Hastings' *Dictionary,* summarizes the situation bearing upon Mark's relation to Peter: "A constant tradition in the early church, reaching back to the confines of the apostolic age and harmonizing with the notices of the New Testament, certifies us that Mark was a companion of St. Peter (i. e., in his missionary labors); was with him toward the end of his life; and wrote the Gospel to preserve his Master's teaching." It is quite apparent that Mark had plenty of opportunity to learn about Jesus and his ministry.

SUMMARY

Mark seems to have been a straightforward, direct, active sort of fellow.

He revealed no qualities of leadership.

As a writer, he was objective, concise, and direct.

He cast the mould of the narrative of Jesus. The other evangelists built up their Gospels from Mark's groundwork.

In modern literary parlance, Mark was a realist.

He was far more practical than doctrinal.

According to church tradition, he wrote his account of the gospel largely with the "slant" of the apostle Peter.

He was, however, much exposed to the benign influence of Paul.

The Gospel according to Mark is full of action. It reveals the power of Christ.

Before My Class of Women

E. K. H.

MARK'S GOSPEL

This is going to be a happy New Year I am sure in our study of the gospel according to the warm-hearted, impulsive, likable young Mark. We can make it so if we will by our regular attendance, genuine interest, serious study, and, above all, by our growing appreciation of the *active* Christ. Look first at (1) the author of this book—the man of the second chance. Look up his biography and make friends with him (Mark 14:51, 52; Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11). Then look at (2) the style, or *manner,* of his Gospel. We are told that this brief, direct, comprehensive account made a strong appeal to the Romans, since they could so readily respond to its forcefulness, its dispatch, its record of an increasing accomplishment. Watch for the words *"straightway, immediately, forthwith."* See how this pictured idea colors the whole narrative. Here is a gospel for the practical business man; for the endlessly busy woman. These begin to feel the urge that was upon Jesus to finish his work (John 9:4). Think quickly too of (3) the content, the matter of the book. Much in little. It is the vivid story of the activity of Jesus. It is full of thronging multitudes and incessant ministries.

Finally, let us keep in mind, as we go on with the lessons, the Aim of the Quarter: "To lead the student to appreciate how Jesus in his life and teachings emphasized service to all men; to help the student to devote his life to the task of building a new world in accordance with the ideals of our Lord."

The Lesson Illustrated

Susanna G. Fisher

THE COST

Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? (Mark 10:38).

An express-train started out from Chicago for the Pacific Coast. On board was the president of the road. As they rushed along in the darkness of the night the train was wrecked. The president of the road was hurried to the front. The engineer was pinned beneath his engine. As the president stood looking at the prostrate form he saw his lips move, and, leaning down, he heard the dying man say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

"Jim," said the president, "I would be willing to give my life with all that I have for such faith as that."

"Mr. President," said Jim, *"that is just what it cost."—World Evangel.*

FOR OTHERS

Whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister (Mark 10:43).

A beautiful young woman whose early life had been a struggle with poverty, married a man of comparative wealth. He was a Christian man, and she was easily persuaded to confess Christ and join the church. Then she felt that she had a right to enjoy herself. She traveled, she bought beautiful furniture and expensive dresses. One day her pastor's wife came to her, saying, "Do you realize how small is the interest in missions among the women of our church? You are the woman to push the work. You are attractive, you have social influence, your husband will finance you." "But I know almost nothing about missions." "True, but you have time to study and learn what is going on in the world, and you have money to buy whatever books you need." "But it means sacrifice and hard work, and I am not willing. I feel that I have a right to enjoy the good things which the Lord has given me." Her pastor's wife left her, saying, "I can only pray for you God has not given you all this for yourself alone, but that through you blessing and help may come to others." After a long and hard struggle, the woman came to realize that she had indeed come to the Kingdom for this. She became one of the most enthusiastic of missionary women, giving time and money in glad sacrifice, and at last leaving her estate to the cause she had come to love with enduring passion. The prayer of the pastor's wife was answered.—*Jennie M. Bingham.*

LESSON 2. JANUARY 9

DEDICATING OUR LIVES TO SERVICE

Mark 1: 1-13. (Parallels in Matthew 3 and 4 and Luke 3 and 4)

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Isaiah 40: 3-11

KEY VERSE: Prepare ye the way of the Lord.—Mark 1: 3

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judæa, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

12 And immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Preparing the Way for Christ. Mark 1:1-8. Do you and I remember, with the appreciation we owe them, those who have been to us forerunners of Jesus? Who have helped prepare the way for him into our lives—parents, Sunday school teachers, preachers?

Tuesday. The Preparation of Baptism. Mark 1:9-13. But we should never be satisfied with just that; it is always a mere preparation. Water *and the Spirit.*

Wednesday. The Preparation of Repentance. Luke 19:1-9. When he was up in the tree, before he came down, he will have repented of his dishonesty. A man can't start toward Christ without a cutting-loose from his sins—at least in resolve.

Thursday. The Preparation of Forgiveness. Ps. 130:1-8. The splendid thing about Jesus' message is that in "the depths" we can look up and out and see a Father who already has the word of forgiveness and welcome on his lips.

Friday. The Preparation of Cleansing. James 4:1-10. It must be thorough and comprehensive — "hands" (character) and "heart" (the whole inner life). Vs. 8; cf. also the implications of Jesus' "But I say unto you," in the Sermon on the Mount.

Saturday. The Preparation of Obedience. Jer. 42:1-6. Because so many times in Christian service we don't see why; must simply "trust and obey."

Sunday. God's Highway. Isa. 40:3-11. The hateful path of sinful living is abandoned; and the distressing battlefields with sinful self; while the mountains and rough places of life that cannot be avoided will, anyhow, on God's road be easier traveling.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

Jesus said, "I am among you as a servant" (Luke 22:27). And he was the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy of a sin-bearing, suffering Servant (Isaiah 53). Then John's mission was a preparation for service on the part of the Lord's Anointed. He was announcing and introducing One who was to serve the human race in infinite, divine measure. "For *their sakes* I dedicate myself" (John 17:19). While those helpful ministries that made the days of Jesus such a blessing for his countrymen were but a leading-up to the greatest service of all, the cross, yet those ministries will have been given us for an example.

When chivalry prevailed, before the knight received the final accolade he kept vigil a night through in his order's church. And it was a consecration, not to fuss and feathers and parade, but to do things; to deeds of mercy. And before every quest the knight received the Communion. This was chivalry in its best form. We are to think of our Lord's baptism and the temptation not as spectacular transactions, and not solely for their symbolical value, but as real inductions into his holy offices and work.

Repentance and insistence upon right morality are made by John essential features of the preparation for Christ. John understood that only such moral integrity would enable men to see the Coming One as God (Jesus' own word, Matt. 5:8).

You can't get Christ into the life until you get the world and the flesh and the devil out. It holds decidedly true of

Christian service. The call to repent naturally precedes the call of the Master, "Go work in my vineyard."

The Lesson Before Us

I. "There Cometh One Mightier"

"The beginning of the gospel." This first verse is really the title-heading of the book, and not Mark's statement that here he commences his narrative. The whole writing is about the gospel's beginning there in Palestine. We are reminded that after all the Christian ages we are still, in a certain sense, at that beginning; and always shall be till all things are fulfilled.

The foundation truth of the gospel, for the Gentile world, would be that Jesus was the Son of God. That world would not be attracted to a religion that was not of God. Accordingly, Mark stresses this fact. In these opening verses, for example, there is the heavenly testimony to the divine Sonship. And none of the evangelists pay more attention than Mark to the wonderfulness of Jesus' life, in its deeds and their results.

Mark always takes account of the fact that the Jews refused to see Jesus as the Son of God. They put him to death for making the claim. Not by his death, however, was his glorious career of saving the world frustrated; furthered, rather.

Mark uses the double name for our Lord, adding the official to the personal. The word Christ as meaning the Messiah did not have any particular significance for Mark's Gentile readers. It is right for us to employ either of the names, or both together, as here, as we are moved. Jesus is the dearest, most intimate of the two for a majority of Christians. The words "Son of God" are expressive of Jesus' thorough identity with the Father; that is, his absolute deity. The final consciousness of this was imparted to him at his baptism.

"John's doctrine was to the preaching of Jesus as a preface to a book; and his baptism was to the new Kingdom as the vigils to a holy day."—*Jeremy Taylor.*

II. The Preparation. Vss. 2-8

The coming of a king to pay a visit to a city or province would be preceded by a herald ("advance agent"). The highways would need to be put in order; lodgings provided; receptions and festivities arranged. Thus was it to be with the coming of the Messiah King. Malachi and Isaiah had foretold it (Mal. 3:1; Isa. 40:3).

"As it is written" should be closely connected with "John came." The idea is also involved here that seasons of national penitence and fasting were likewise proclaimed by the public herald.

The Christians for whom Mark was writing and the entire early church were deeply interested in these Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled in Christ, because they were another evidence that his Advent was no casual happening, but something so important and necessary that it had been eternally planned in the counsels of God. Mark is chary of Old Testament quotations and this is one of the very few that he uses. He has Jesus' own authority for his application of the above prophecy (Matt. 11:10).

The description of John would satisfy those who had expected that a reincarnated Elijah should be the forerunner. (Comp. 2 Kings 1:8; where "hairy man" is, better, "man with a garment of hair-cloth.") His figure stands out in our imaginations as a typical prophet, of the sterner sort.

Wild honey would be an easily procurable food there in the wilderness. Parts of the locust—it was a "clean" food (Lev. 11:22)—are eaten today by the Arabs, cooked when fresh, or dried. It is not regarded as a very palatable food. At least, travelers say not.

John preached repentance rather than baptism. This is evident from the parallel accounts. His baptism was a sign and seal of the individual's determination to confess, repent, and seek forgiveness. "It solemnly declared the repentance of him receiving it . . . a suitable act. . . If a man honestly sought full remission, it was only right that he should perform this act; so Peter said on the day of Pentecost" (W. N. Clarke, in the *American Commentary*).

The meaning of the rite demands that the one baptized be mature enough to grasp its significance, but precludes its being regarded as a "saving ordinance." That the form was immersion is now held by practically the entire Christian world. We may regard John's introduction of baptism as a part of the preparation for Christ. It, so to speak, came into the church before the church.

The looming greatness of the King he is heralding so imposes upon his imagination that he is compelled to think very humbly of his own mission. (Comp. for his modesty, John 3:29, 30.) He seems to sense the insufficiency of his preaching and his water baptism for the real and great need of the sinful world.

Notice that John's teaching is not a gospel. Jesus also preached repentance, but something else; something infinitely more precious. Jesus said that the least of his followers was to get beyond John (Luke 7:28).

III. Initiation. Vss. 9-11

Jesus recognizes John's mission as not only a preparation for, but also as an appropriate beginning of his own. By joining it he finally and decisively commits himself to his own "cause." Baptism becomes to us a holy thing because it inaugurated him into his divine offices and work.

As for the voice from out of the heavens, we can scarcely imagine Jesus' entering upon his active ministry without such an assurance from the Father as it gave him.

The wilderness where John preached and baptized would have been an unsettled district in the Jordan Valley—traditionally near Jericho—not wilderness in our sense.

The representation of the Holy Spirit by a dovelike semblance is appropriate. We think of the dove of the Deluge. Among the Samaritans the dove stands for the glory of God. "The thought may be that the Divine Spirit is a spirit of (dovelike) gentleness; or that the Father looks tenderly upon the Son who does always the things that please him" (W. N. Clarke).

Peter tells us that this was Jesus' formal anointing for his ministry (Acts 10:38). Weiss thinks that he recognized it as his secret anointing as Messiah King. Attention has often been called to the fact that all three personalities of the Trinity participate in this holy event.

That Jesus submitted to a "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" should not trouble us. Of course it was not that to him. That he acquiesced in the rite along with the others was just like Jesus. (Comp. Matt. 3:15.) "He (thus) identifies himself with the humble and assumes responsibility for Israel's sins. It is a symbol of social solidarity and of submission to the will of God" (A. Bruce Curry, Jr.).

IV. Commitment, and How? Vss. 12, 13

Notice the directness of Mark. He seems to be in a hurry to get right into the "action" of Jesus' saving career. He omits preliminaries. He says, "John came," without saying whence; he introduces Jesus with the abrupt, "Jesus came." He gives no details of the temptation, as do Matthew and Luke. But it is assumed to be a part of the preparation of Jesus.

The divine commitment had been made and the divine assurance given at his baptism. But Jesus must first become clear as to the program of this new spiritual kingdom that he is to head; and to the assurance of the Father must be added his own clear-cut, hardened conviction that he will and can go through to the end with this task and office—and cross; putting aside the cup of material comfort, and worldly honor and glory, and draining to the dregs the other one.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ Ministers of course prepare themselves for service. Should not Christian laymen make similar preparation, so that they may render efficient Kingdom service? Do you know of the opportunities for such training ("leadership training") that the church is today providing?

¶ Consider the John-the-Baptist-side of soul-winning. Do you realize its

importance? Preparing the way of the Lord into the hearts of people. Social service—that is, removing the obstacles that obstruct Christ's way into human hearts. Doesn't this concern the Sunday school teacher?

¶ Consider that our world today has many things of which it needs to repent. Can we make much more progress in the Kingdom until there is more repentance?

¶ Has not every Christian—supposedly—dedicated his life to Christian service? But do we use the word "dedicate" in too impossible and exaggerated a sense? Does not our Lord teach (in the allegory of the Vine and the Branches) that the undedicated Christian life isn't really a Christian life—undedicated to service?

Notes and Comments

The word "gospel" in the New Testament never means a written document; but always, the message of salvation. (Comp. Acts 20:24; Gal. 2:2,5; Eph. 6:15.)

Consecration is not wrapping oneself in a holy web in the sanctuary, and then coming forth after prayer and twilight meditation, and saying, "There, I am consecrated." Consecration is taking advantage of trust funds—as confidential debts owed to God: it is simply dedicating one's life, in its whole flow, to God's service.—*H. W. Beecher.*

God does not want golden vessels, and he does not want silver vessels, but he has got to have clean vessels. . . God has yet to show the world what he can do with a man entirely consecrated to him.—*D. L. Moody.*

The baptism of Jesus must ever remain the strongest of all arguments in urging those who have confessed Christ not to neglect to confess him also in this ordinance. "It is the way the Master went, should not the servant tread it still?" A rather unfamiliar hymn of S. Dryden Phelps', found in the older hymn-books, ends with the verse:

How sweet the way divine to take,
So clear in Jordan's story;
On souls that follow Christ shall break
The Spirit's beam of glory.

In the realm of individual secular accomplishment vocational guidance has developed skills. From the *Social Work Year-Book* for 1937, I quote:

"Vocational guidance is the giving of information, counsel, and experience which will aid an individual in choosing, preparing for, entering upon, and progressing in a recognized occupational livelihood. Its objectives are an awakening of the individual to the realization that he has a problem to solve, self-examination as to what he is or may become, self-appraisal of assets and liabilities, self-judgment as to what he will do about it, and, most important of all, self-realization that he has worked toward the solution of his own problems. Vocational decisions, to be effective, must never be imposed by another from without."

To him who reads with imagination, the above will reveal much in common with the man who seeks the good life.

Prepare to meet thy God. Prepare thyself for service. Save the world by godly service. Character, skill, perseverance and cooperation are the four ingredients necessary in any scheme of social salvation.

Teachers' Helps

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

PREPARING FOR A LIFE OF SERVICE

"Hark! Someone is shouting in the desert:
'Get the Lord's way ready,
Make his paths straight.'"

A worried world. A harassed civilization. A social desert. "Jittery" statesmen. Truth on the scaffold. Dictatorship rampant. Spain, China. The Mediterranean. A chip on the shoulder. Piracy. Suspicion and accusation. Civil war. How to save? No—how to kill. The state greater than God.

The ship needs a rudder. The road needs a marker. This "twisted, topsy-turvy world" sadly needs a pilot. In short, a motivating factor of the right sort is essential to world-wide, contemporary salvation. Where shall we find it?

What are some of the social forces asserting themselves today? Religion, business, labor, education, organized social work, politics, law, medicine are among them. The attempt to segregate these social forces into independent categories augurs ill. You may prosper at my expense—but not for long. And vice versa. Humanity is linked in a common struggle. This is so, whether or not humanity at a given period may recognize it. This is the meaning of brotherhood. This is the significance of a belief in a God who has chosen to limit himself in cooperative procedure with his creatures. This is the basis for a call in the desert bidding us to "get the Lord's way ready." Social progress is dependent upon individual adjustment. If Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler, Roosevelt, the nations' premiers, the governors and legislators of forty-eight states, Smith, Brown, Jones, Stillman—"you all"—had the spirit of the Messiah regnant in their respective souls, do you not think we should have peace, courtesy, consideration, justice, freedom, happiness?

Well, this is the cooperation of that John the Baptist who proclaimed him whose shoe-latchets he was not and we are not worthy to unloose. As to John the Baptist's call, "all Judea and everybody in Jerusalem went out to him there." I believe in social reform, organized mass effort, the processes of education. I believe also that the only way to progress in social betterment is through the avenue of a body of individuals committed to the way of God in essential virtue. Let us all go "out to him there." The best way I know of to prepare for service is to prepare the individual *for* service.

There are many righteous people who forget the law of cause and effect. To build a bridge, to pass a law, to influence public opinion, to keep a set of books—these all require knowledge and experience. Being a God-fearing man is, of course, no guarantee against a lot of bungling in technical matters. A godly motivation, however, is essential progress. If the Christ spirit permeates law, medicine, social work, business, labor, and so forth, then we are following an arrowhead toward social harmony, progress and happiness.

Before My Class of Women

E. K. H.

PREPARATION

Our lesson today shows the weight of evidence, and therefore of influence, resultant from the obvious *preparation* made for the coming of Jesus. All through the Old Testament we have watched the anticipatory trend of events and ideas. The advent and the life of Jesus justifies, fulfils, the details of this preparation.

And now comes John the Baptist with his definite announcement of the imminent appearance of the Christ, his introduction of Jesus as the Christ, and his message concerning repentance, itself, as a preparation.

Jesus fitted into the divine plan from its beginning, and as Mark later in life recalled it all, its bearing was vital, its import conclusive. And you and I agree with Mark, so far as his estimate of Jesus was concerned, and also so far as what Jesus came to do and to teach is concerned.

In other words, we are convinced that *nothing less than genuine repentance can ever prepare the way for the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.* It is our first step in the Christian life, as it was Mark's first stroke in his great picture. As John was the human forerunner, so repentance is the human preparation for the divine act. Follow this parallel also through verse 8. You and I may have passed through the vestibule into the temple. We may have registered our sincere repentance, and have accepted the promised salvation. But our friends may not have done so.

Then your message and mine today is

the old, old message of John. We must proclaim to others the need of a repentance which shall make Christ's path straight throughout their hearts and lives.

Some time ago I spent the night hours in the lighthouse tower at Atlantic City. It was interesting to observe the many circular prisms of glass scientifically arranged so that all the rays of light from the small lamp, which might have been lost, were refracted from their truant course to a common center, and the focalized band of light was directed far out to sea, guiding the vessels safely into port. John the Baptist was the herald centralizing all the rays of prophecy and promise that the true Light might be seen afar in the world.

Our lesson presents to us this herald of the Master in his threefold relation to his public life and service to mankind.

First, the man. "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." The great need of the world today is God-sent men, who shall realize their divine appointment and be conscious of their great responsibility. Second, John's mission. "The same came to bear witness of the light." The King's messenger on the most important business ever intrusted to man.

Third, John's message. "The Light of the world has come." "Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "Prepare ye the way of the Lord."

The Lesson Illustrated

Susanna G. Fisher

A Snare for Rabbits

Tempted of Satan (Mark 1:13).

Temptations overcome make us not more careless, but more watchful. "I came across one of our Indians among the pines. He was kneeling on the snow, arranging a miniature lane of pine-branches and twigs. I stood and watched him. 'What is it you are making?' I inquired. 'I am making a snare for rabbits,' he replied. 'But where is the snare?' I asked. 'Oh, I don't put the snare in for a couple of weeks yet,' he said. 'Then what is the use of your present arrangements?' I demanded. 'Ha! ha! I first make the rabbits familiar with the environment. They will come tonight and will be very suspicious of this. Next night they will come a little closer, and so on until they find there is no danger. Then they will begin to nibble at these twigs,' touching the arch in the center; 'and then, when they start eating the twigs I shall put in my snare, arranging it cleverly in the middle of this little arch, and then I shall catch a rabbit every night. Every morning when I come along here I shall find a fine plump rabbit dangling at the end of my pole. Rabbits have no sense.'" —*Dr. H. T. Kerr, in Westminster Teacher.*

Our Atmosphere

He was there in the wilderness . . . tempted of Satan (vs. 13).

Why is it one man falls into sins of spite and jealousy and greed and trickery, while his neighbor is magnanimous, generous, straightforward, self-forgetful? Do not we all live in an atmosphere reeking with selfishness, yet one is stricken and the other escapes? Why should the bacilli settle in one man's lungs only? Because they have found a congenial soil. There are souls so mean by habit and training that sin takes root in them like fungi in a bed of corruption—souls so pure and lofty that in their atmosphere every evil thought is sterilized. In the sudden hour of temptation one reaps the reward of his past—of good or evil.—*Ian Maclaren.*

Baptism

Jesus came . . . and was baptized of John in Jordan (vs. 9).

For the first thirteen centuries after Christ immersion was well-nigh universally practised. Men have professed to be wiser than their Lord, and repudiated this ordinance. Remember, "He who despises an ordinance of God despises the God of the ordinance." Our Lord was baptized. Can the disciple be above his master? Instead, "every one when he is perfected shall be as his master" (Luke 6:40).—*J. C. F. Pittman.*

LESSON 3. JANUARY 16

ADJUSTING LIFE TO SERVICE

Mark 1: 14-28. (Parallels in Matthew 4 and Luke 4 and 5)

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Isaiah 11: 1-9

KEY VERSE: The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.—Mark 1: 15

14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught.

22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Repentance and Faith. Mark 1:14, 15. It is the natural order. The holy Christ is invisible to sinful eyes. Only the pure in heart can see God (Matt. 5:8). "The (sinful?) world seeth me no more" (John 14:19). Repentance gives the spiritual eyesight.

Tuesday. Fishermen Begin a Life of Service. Mark 1:16-20. Jesus was starting the greatest enterprise of all time. He began with "just a handful"—four freshwater fishermen. Little church, small Sunday school, slender prayer-meeting! Don't get the ecclesiastical inferiority complex. Christ can do a lot with even you.

Wednesday. Jesus' First Act of Healing. Mark 1:21-28. God is always bringing together the need of men and the help of Christ.

Thursday. Jesus Calls Men to Service. Matt. 4:18-22. An English nobleman wrote to his son: "If you see a good fight anywhere, get into it." Those Galilean fishermen were perspicacious.

They knew a good thing when they saw it.

Friday. Peter Heals a Lame Man. Acts 3:1-11. Lots of good things have happened to people in and around churches. And every temple gate (church door) is "Beautiful"—or should be made so!

Saturday. Three Thousand Enlist for Service. Acts 2:37-47. Splendid! But let us not forget the young Man of Nazareth, who walked alone on the lake shore, and the four fishermen he happened upon—they started the great procession.

Sunday. The Culmination of Our Lord's Ministry. Isa. 11:1-9. Antiquity was always looking forward to a Messiah-Saviour. We can look back at the true one. What is better, can see him with us in our world today.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

Galilee. Mark is distinctively a Galilean Gospel. The name occurs infrequently in the Old Testament (Joshua 20:7; 1 Kings 9:11; 2 Kings 15:29; Isa. 9:1). In Hebrew it is *galil,* meaning "circle," or "circuit," or perhaps "district." The name was sometimes applied to pretty much all the north country, though originally it was restricted to the territory of Naphtali. The plain of Esdraelon and Mount Gilboa would mark its southern boundary. A distinction between Upper and Lower Galilee was sometimes made. The designation "Galilee of the Gentiles," or "nations," was applied because of the large number of non-Jewish, or Jews of mixed blood, residing there (Matt. 4:15). For religious reasons the Jews of the south referred to Galilee contemptuously (John 7:41, 52); yet it was really the most fertile and prosperous part of Palestine. The people, also, were more genial, liberal, and cultured than those of the south. Greek was pretty generally spoken. This had so affected the native Hebrew (Aramaic) that it seemed to the Jerusalemites a veritable dialect (Matt. 26:73). Galilee was densely populated; great cities and towns everywhere.

The Lake of the Gospels. The Sea of Galilee is known also as Lake Gennesaret (Luke 5:1; "water of Gennesar," 1 Macc. 11:67)—from the plain of that name to its northwest—and as the Sea of Tiberias, from the city on its western shore. In the Old Testament it is called the Sea of Chinneroth (Joshua 12:3). It is about six miles wide and twelve long, pear-shaped. Its waters are noted for abundant fish, and are treacherous. Galilean boatmen need constantly to be on the watch for sudden and violent storms (Matt. 8:24). So much of the ministry of Jesus was carried on here that it was called a "Fifth Gospel."

"Galilee, bright Galilee,
Hallowed thoughts we turn to thee."

The Lesson Before Us

I. The Early Galilean Manistry
Mark 1:14, 15

After the baptism and temptation there evidently follows a ministry in Judea. At least some of the incidents recorded in John 1:19 to 4:45 would seem to call for such a ministry. Mark only refers to it as a reason for Jesus' withdrawal from Judea (cp. Matt. 4:12). That is, the hostility of John, which was likely to be transferred to himself, made it difficult for him to continue his propaganda there.

The Scripture of our lesson presents Jesus in three typical aspects: as enlisting disciples (vss. 14-20); teaching (vss. 21, 22); and healing (vss. 23-27). We also find here a beginning of that persistent opposition of the spirit of evil that was to continue to the end.

"Now after that John was put in prison Jesus came." God never allows a break in the succession of his fighters for righteousness. Jesus came to be king of an everlasting, world-kingdom, but not with scepter or sword did he come: he came *preaching!*

"Preaching" here is, of course, used in the untechnical sense of declaring, speaking, telling; yet the office of preacher is exalted by the fact that "Jesus came preaching." The oldest manuscripts have simply "the gospel of God," omitting the word kingdom.

Gospel of God is equivalent to: the good news that the reign of God on earth is now to begin; literally, "has come near." Yet when Mark wrote these paragraphs that term "gospel" had already taken on a richness of meaning of which at first men had no conception.

Jesus takes up John's call and demand, Repent! but completes it with, Believe!—in the forgiveness, mercy, and love of God, as I make him known to you. In short, in Jesus' speech that word repent takes on new meaning. Outside of his gospel, apart from his salvation, it is a cold, hopeless word.

II. The First Disciples. Vss. 16-20

There are many reasons why Jesus needed what we call the apostleship, the little group of his immediate, intimate followers. Two of these reasons are stated in 3:14: That they should be with him, day in and day out, to be instructed by him in his truth and trained for the service of his kingdom; so that after his earthly ministry was over the gospel might go on saving men.

He needed their fellowship; he was too much alone, in many senses. The man Jesus could not do without human friendship, sympathy, and support. "I have called you friends," he said to these same men (John 15:15). The person who thinks he can dispense with friends had better bethink himself that the Lord Jesus Christ couldn't.

You can represent the varying degrees of nearness to Jesus by drawing concentric circles around a common center—Jesus. Farthest away are those who were simply "interested." A little closer those who gave him a hesitating allegiance—like Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Then the great body of his adherents. Still closer those who spent in his following as much of their time as their circumstances would permit.

Next, his actual followers or workers, whom he definitely called and commissioned, among whom were the Seventy. Within this group the still narrower band of the Twelve. Still closer to him, the smallest coterie, Peter, James, and John.

This trio, and Andrew, followed him (vss. 18, 20), we may suppose, to learn more of his secret. That they were willing to do it, to leave their business and their father is specified to show their keen interest in the Teacher and the genuineness of their incipient faith.

On Jesus' part it was a testing of the stuff that was in them, before he definitely commissioned them apostles (we think of his remark in the parable of the Marriage Feast, "Many are called, but few are chosen," Matt. 22:14).

The call will not have been so abrupt as might seem. They were not entire strangers to Jesus. Andrew and John, at least, had been John the Baptist's disciples and were with the forerunner when he proclaimed Jesus "in Bethabara beyond Jordan" (John 1:35). "These men followed Christ because they had already discovered that *he was worth* following" (J. D. Jones).

"Fishers of men." "And that is what we all ought to be; we are saved that we may become saviours. . . How may we become 'fishers of men'? Not by our own cleverness or skill. 'I will make you to become fishers of men,' says our Lord. 'I will make you'—that is the equipment" (*The Devotional Commentary*).

III. The Demoniac Healed
Vss. 21-28

This man was mentally sick. It says that he was in the power—"possessed"—of an unclean spirit, of demons. There is nothing in the latest teachings of mental pathology against this terminology. If a man can be filled with the Holy Spirit, why may he not be filled with the spirit of evil?

If you have not seen people literally possessed of, in the grip of, demons, the devil, you have not been very observant. Among folks who did not regard the control of one's passions—inhibition—as particularly desirable this evil spirit would have free rein. It would be called unclean because those thus possessed would be ritually tabu; or because their life apart would conduce to filthy habits and dress.

Not all demoniacs were violent. The

e here excites our pity, as he did sus'. The better nature of him had ught the house of God on God's day. ie use of the plural "we" is interest-g. The most of us have found that e wickedness in us is multiple.

The powers of darkness thus early in r Lord's career recognize him as their eat antagonist, whose objective is their struction. They likewise see in him, so many men didn't—and don't—the oly One of God.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

Would there be a difference between the "gospel of God" that Jesus preached and the gospel that his followers preach today? Just how did the cross-death and the resurrection affect that message?

In what respects was the time "fulfilled"? (Vs. 15.) And what is meant by "the kingdom of God is at hand"?

If you had been in Jesus' place, selecting apostles, what traits would you have looked for in the men you were choosing? In other words, what sort of men and women does Jesus today need for the work of his Kingdom?

If you were preaching a sermon on "Fishers of Men," what are some of the points you would make?

Why would Jesus feel more at home in a synagogue than in the Temple at Jerusalem?

Can you tell of cases, that have come under your own observation, where Christian faith has delivered men from the power of the devil—as manifest in drunkenness, sex vice, the grip of dope, violent temper, money or pleasure madness—when other reformatory measures and influences had failed?

¶ Note the significance of "unclean spirit" (vs. 23). Is evil in us—sin—ever clean? And we speak of Christ's salvation as a cleansing: "Wash me in the blood of the Lamb and I shall be whiter than snow."

¶ What features of Jesus' teaching made the people think of it as "new doctrine?" (Vs. 27.) Are you impressed with this newness when you compare the New Testament with the Old?

Notes and Comments

"Because this is the best news that ever might or ever could be brought to man, it is called 'the gospel,' which means 'good tidings.' It is the gospel of God because he sent it, and the gospel of Christ because Christ was the bearer of it, and confirmed it by his death."—*Juan de Valdes.*

"Christ's preaching of repentance is quite different from John's. The former was accompanied by the Spirit, who creates it; it is itself a gospel; the latter, like the Old Testament in general, demands without giving. For even repentance is a gift of God."—*Olshausen.*

Notice how Mark's thesis that Jesus is the divine Son of God is carried out in Jesus' ability to establish his Kingdom upon the foundation, not of a seminary of theologians, or a school of philosophers, or a staff of generals—but of a handful of small-lake fishermen. I guess he could do a lot with any of us, if only we would respond with their readiness and trust.

While it is natural that there should be various grades of discipleship, any Christian should be ashamed to let his relationship to the Master be indicated by one of the outer circles we have referred to. And manifestly, the nearer we get to the center, Christ, the more fully do we share in his grace and love, and the joy of his service.

The way Mark plunges immediately into his challenging activities will appeal to all of us. I like Mark. He wastes no time. His version of the life of Jesus is like the Master himself. There is work to be done (Jesus), so why dally about telling how he did it (Mark). It takes our breath to read these few verses and try to imagine how much they must have meant in terms of the six enumerations just above.

John prepared—and Jesus prepared. The time for action having arrived, they became passionately busy. As we read the life of Jesus, we are over and over again impressed with the skilful way in which he turned casual situations into opportunities. You will think of many. Here are a few: Zacchæus climbing a tree only to have a look at the passing preacher. The woman at the well. The rich young ruler. The questioning of the scribes. And notice the circumstances involved in calling the fishermen to become disciples. There must have been great appeal in the voice of Jesus as he spoke to the four humble fellows.

In a radio play of today, a peasant girl hears for the first time the music of the violin. It is played by one who suddenly came into her life and who loves her.

"You have never heard music with your heart," said he.

"Don't folks hear music with the ears, mister?" she responded.

"Music, my dear, is never music unless the heart takes to itself the inspiration of its message."

"Nothing ever sounded so sweet before, and it must be my heart that likes it."

What took place in the hearts of those homely fishermen on the shores of Galilee? Who knows? But it was their hearts that heard. So then, Jesus began his service by enlisting helpers. The Master wanted friends; he had to have them. So do we all. The Christian church, rightly conceived, is a group of believers in fellowship with each other and with God. They are—or should be—kindred spirits.

Most of us have had our time of preparation—"The time is fulfilled." Most of us have helpful associates ready to work along with us—"Come, follow me!" Why are not our accomplishments greater? With consternation we think of the destruction of missionary property in China, in "the undeclared war" raging as these few lines are being typed.

The great need in the Christian church today is a clarion call for big, heavy service to captivate the imagination and require sacrifice. I do not mean the call for a new building—that certainly has its place. I do not mean the raising of the church budget—that surely is of vital importance. I do not mean a committee to select and buy a new carpet—though such action is often of immediate significance.

If I knew the call and the occasion and the project, I would be a mighty

Teachers' Helps

In the Men's Class

harles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

BEGINNING A LIFE OF SERVICE

You are under arrest."

Under arrest? What have I done?"

Raising a fuss generally, and getting the community excited about this man a call Jesus; and your so-called good vs. Good news! What a laugh!"

But have I broken any law?"

Who said you had? All I know is t I have orders to arrest you. So he on, before I get rough."

Thus did John the Baptist experience ess. He was the official announcer of greatest character that ever crossed threshold of history. Mark's Gospel (1:14, Goodspeed) makes brief reference to the encounter between John and the Roman policeman: "After John was arrested, Jesus went into Galilee proclaiming the good news from God, saying——"

Saying what? The answer comprehends Jesus' beginning in a life of service. In this lesson's Scripture Jesus is reported as doing the following:

1. Announced a new dispensation—the time has come.
2. Urged repentance and belief.
3. Chose helpers—Simon, Andrew, James and John.
4. Carried his message to the synagogue.
5. Displayed his power—release for the man with the foul spirit.
6. Became famous—verse 28.

prophet. Germany and Italy reveal how people respond to emotional appeal, turned into channels of national pride. Some day our hearts will be so fired with love for God and love for men that we shall function in our respective spheres with the zeal of an Isaiah and an Elijah. We shall turn all the mundane events of daily living into opportunities for service in the name of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

From profits to prophets is not so impossible as it might seem. We do not have much to challenge us, so we put our energies to the work at hand. Fidelity to duty is most assuredly a virtue; I do not decry that. My own work I love; probably you love your work too; I hope you do. You and I both do not want our engrossment in our daily tasks to stifle our vision of alignment with the services that indicate a regenerate world, practising justice, truth, freedom, and holiness. Tell me, reader, what is the big service we all can engage in while at the same time we are earning our bread and butter? How can we serve now and adjust our lives to service?

Before My Class of Women

R. S.

Beginning a Life of Service

Instead of jumping spectacularly from a pinnacle of the Temple to prove his Messiahship, Jesus comes quietly and modestly into Galilee to preach a gospel of repentance; and his first act there is to go down to the seashore and ask four plain, hard-working fishermen to join him.

What qualities did Jesus seek in those who were to be his intimate companions and co-workers? If he were picking followers today in America, what sort of men and women would he call? Would you be one of them?

It is said that one of the qualities of a good business executive is his ability to select the ablest possible people as his assistants. On that standard, was Jesus a good executive? Why did these men follow him so promptly and stedfastly? What does it mean to you to follow Christ? Why are you doing it?

What does it mean to be a "fisher of men"? Incidentally, and seriously, some of the best fishermen are women. Has Jesus made you a "fisher of men"? If yes, how well, how faithfully, are you doing it?

Mental healing, faith healing, and the relation between spiritual, mental, and bodily health have become very popular subjects during the past few years. Newspapers and magazines are full of it. They drag in Jesus' miracles. The teacher, especially of an adult class, must therefore have some acquaintance with these matters in order to answer pertinent or perplexing questions about them and to correct the many erroneous, half-baked, and irreligious teachings that are abroad. If it is deep-water for him, let him go to his pastor, or to some good Christian physician, for enlightenment, and for suggestions as to informative reading.

Try to show how Jesus' healing power, if always in the first instance used for the relief of suffering, yet brought him fame and called forth faith in him as a teacher of spiritual truth.

The Lesson Illustrated

Susanna G. Fisher

Workers for Christ

Come ye after me (Mark 1:17).

A merchant in England determined that no day should pass without his speaking to someone about Christ; in one year he led scores to the Master.

A business man in Wales spoke to his office-boy about his soul, and from that word a work began that won his entire office force for Christ.

A father traveled a thousand miles to tell his son that he was concerned about his soul, and he had the joy of winning him to the Saviour.

"Next to the Bible, what is the best book to use in mission work? Your check-book!"—*Selected.*

Voluntary Poverty

They forsook their nets and followed him (Mark 1:18).

Chrysostom, the greatest preacher of ancient times, gave up his property at his conversion to Christianity and lived in poverty. He attacked the luxury of the court at Constantinople so that he was thrice banished and finally died of hardship in exile. He cried, "Behold the idea we should have of the rich and covetous! They are truly robbers, who, standing in the public highways, despoil the passers-by; they convert their churches into caverns, in which they bury the goods of others."—*International Journal of Religious Education.*

His Life Spoke

I will make you to become fishers of men (Mark 1:17).

The story is told of Gordon Maxwell, missionary to India, who went to a Hindu pundit and asked if he would teach him his language. The Hindu pundit replied, "No, sahib, I will not teach you my language. You would make me a Christian."

Gordon Maxwell replied, "You misunderstand me. I simply am asking you if you would teach me your language."

The Hindu replied again, "No, sahib, I will not teach you. No man can live with you and not become a Christian."

Missionary Zeal

And straightway he called them (Mark 1:20).

A community of Negroes in the Congo was powerfully moved by a missionary, so that all of them accepted the great truth of the gospel and exper enced the joy of salvation. Then th looked across the river at a heath community that dwelt there. "We a saved," the new Christians cried, "a they know nothing of Jesus!" Prompt fifty of them took food, jumped in boats, and crossed the river, and spe three days in preaching Christ to t villages on the opposite shore. Th missionary zeal is the evidence and te of a conversion. In proportion as o has it, he may be sure that he is Christian. If you are quite content th those near you should remain witho Christ, you may well begin to fear th you yourself are without Christ.—*Wes minster Teacher.*

Something Hidden

The kingdom of God is at hand (Ma 1:15).

Men have gone to the farthest corne of the earth in obedience to the Voi that calls saying, "Find it, find it, fi it!"

Columbus heard the Voice and it ra out above all the laughter and scorn his fellows. Having once heard it, not ing could silence it. He heard it in t night-time, he heard it in the daytime, could not get away from it. He follow it through Italy to Spain, to Portugal, France, back to the palace, eager ev to seize the queen's proffered jewels thus he might obey the Voice. At la with three small ships and a convict cre he set sail. Through an unknown was of water with his tiny ships and h handful of frightened men he follow the Voice—and found a world. . .

Something is indeed hidden behind t ranges. "Something hidden—lost—wai ing for you." Go—follow the Chris and find it.—*From "The Charm of t Impossible," by Margaret Slattery.*

Those Who Dare All

And straightway they forsook the nets and followed him (Mark 1:18).

Apart from God there is no life, assurance, no gain. And it is those wh dare all and accept all the risks wh find the eternal power and bring t kingdom of God from heaven to eart Every gain of man, every new assuran of faith, has been won by venturing up the fundamental convictions of the so in the teeth of difficulty and with a cha lenge to all events.—*W. E. Orchard.*

Knowing Christ

And he called them (Mark 1:20).

Personal acquaintance with Christ is living thing, like a tree that uses eve hour for growth. It thrives in sunshin it is refreshed by rain—even the stor drives it to fasten its grip more firmly the earth for its support. So, troubl heart, in all experience, say, "This com that I may make closer acquaintance wi my Lord."

LESSON 4. JANUARY 23

CHRISTIANITY'S CONCERN FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

Mark 1: 29-45

[Prepared by Kenneth C. MacArthur, Sterling, Massachusetts]

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Isaiah 61: 1-6

KEY VERSE: And he healed many that were sick.—Mark 1: 34

29 And forthwith, when they were ome out of the synagogue, they entered nto the house of Simon and Andrew, vith James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick f a fever, and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came and took her by the and, and lifted her up; and imme- iately the fever left her, and she minis- ered unto them.

32 And at even, when the sun did set, hey brought unto him all that were dis- ased, and them that were possessed with evils.

33 And all the city was gathered to- ether at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick f divers diseases, and cast out many evils; and suffered not the devils to peak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a reat while before day, he went out, and eparted into a solitary place, and there rayed.

36 And Simon and they that were with im followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, ney said unto him, All men seek for nee.

38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their syna- gogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

40 And there came a leper to him, be- seeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, im- mediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45 But he went out, and began to pub- lish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Jesus' Second Act of Heal- ng. Mark 1: 29-39. People in need, of very kind, eagerly sought Jesus' help nd he poured himself out in order to e of service to them. He recharged ie batteries of his personality, as it ere, by communion with his Father.

Tuesday. Healing a Leper. Mark 1:)-45. Jesus really cared for the poor utcast and was willing to touch his athsome body in order to bring him ssurance of a cure. If we truly love eople and desire to help them, we must e willing to perform disagreeable tasks.

Wednesday. A Palsied Man Healed. Matt. 9: 1-8. One of the characteristic junctions of Christ is: "Be of good heer." Robert Louis Stevenson says ere is no duty neglected so much as at of being happy. Two solid grounds r cheer appear in this narrative, the rgiveness of sin and the restoration of ealth. The gospel of Jesus is still osely connected with both.

Thursday. Commissioned to Heal. att. 10: 1-8. The apostles (messengers missionaries) are sent out with a two- ld commission, to proclaim the realm heaven among men and to restore to alth those distressed in mind and body. ney had freely received inspiration and uth from their Master; these spiritual easures they were freely to give to others. It is interesting to note the wide variations in economic status and political affiliation (a publican and a Zealot) among the Twelve. Our Lord's followers today should have a fellowship that transcends prejudices and class differences.

Friday. Peter's Power to Heal. Acts 9: 32-41. The vivid details in this passage suggest that Luke heard them from an eye-witness. Still, after the removal of the visible presence of Jesus, the work of kindness goes on. Dorcas is typical of multitudes of Christian women who have endeared themselves to others by practical acts of helpfulness.

Saturday. Meeting Human Needs. Luke 9: 10-17. Although our Lord and his disciples needed rest and tried to avoid the crowd, he welcomed them even though they came at an inopportune time. He realized the importance of supplying their physical needs and not only healed some but fed them all. How he did it is a mystery, but this miracle is the only one, except the resurrection, that is attested by all four of the Gospels.

Sunday. The Divine Benefactor. Isa. 61: 1-6. A proclamation of joy to the miserable and unhappy, with which Jesus begins his ministry at Nazareth (Luke 4: 18). However, the reference to "the day of vengeance" was omitted on the latter occasion. The Messiah brings liberty and joy; a nobler era to mankind.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

A gospel for Americans. In our "brave new world" the man of action has been preferred to the man of meditation. The girl who said, "I like men who do things," represents a common attitude among our people. The Romans also admired men who achieved, and traditions tells us that this shortest and earliest of the Gospels was written especially for that masterful race whose practical activities still excite our wonder.

Another characteristic of Americans is "to make it snappy." This Book of Mark is characterized by words like "immediately," "straightway," "anon," while some of the words of Jesus are given, the *deeds* occupy a more prominent place.

The author is generally believed to have been the John Mark referred to both in Acts and in several of the Epistles as a companion of Paul. It is likely that he was sleeping in the house where the Last Supper took place and, awakened by the men coming downstairs, pulled a sheet around himself and followed Jesus and the Eleven (Mark 14: 51, 52).

Mark especially stresses the healing miracles. Some disbelieve in all miracles. While we grant that the reign of natural law seems universal, we must agree that as yet man knows but little and that many new laws await discovery. Perhaps Jesus wrought his mighty works in accordance with laws which man will, in due time, understand. The significant thing is that nearly every New Testament miracle is an expression of loving helpfulness to those in need. Such acts of kindness are the best evidence for the character of Jesus and the apostles. These stories could not have been told of unfeeling, selfish men.

All through the Christian ages the church has been concerned with men's physical needs; not alone in feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, but also in a great ministry of healing. Everywhere there are hospitals whose very names testify to the religious motive back of their establishment and maintenance. Many have found through faith, healing for both soul and body. Medical missions are one of the finest expressions of the outreach of the fellowship of Christ.

The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America recently appointed a Committee on Religion and Health. It has grown out of consultations with the New York Academy of Medicine. The two groups will continue to keep in touch with each other. Lay people as

well as ministers should familiarize themselves with the best ways of bringing religious faith, hope and cheer to the aid of the injured and ill. "I was sick and ye visited me," said Jesus, identifying himself with every human sufferer.

Ministering to physical needs is not only a practical way of exhibiting the spirit of the Good Samaritan, it is following the Christ who took an interest in people who were poor, hungry, cold and in pain. Much of his recorded activity was of this nature. Let us think of it not as opposed to spiritual work, but as a manifestation of the divine Spirit.

The Lesson Before Us

I. Peter's Mother-in-Law

Jesus was interested not alone in crowds but also in individuals. A poor old sick woman, running a high temperature (Luke, the physician, tells us she had a great or violent fever) enlists his prompt attention. He must have been tired after the excitement of the synagogue service and the curing of the demoniac, but without resting he restores the woman to her usual health.

It is interesting to note that the only apostle whom we know to have been married (cf. 1 Cor. 9:5), and whose wife accompanied him on his missionary journeys, is the one regarded by Roman Catholics, who teach clerical celibacy, as the first pope.

II. The Evening of Service

When the sun had set, the Sabbath was over, and invalids could be brought to Peter's house without their bearers being accused of breaking the strict regulations in regard to the day of rest. In the cool of the evening it would be pleasanter for all concerned in this great gathering of sick folk and their friends.

Among these unhappy folks were many "possessed with devils." They constitute one of the perplexing problems connected with New Testament study—on the part of modern people who have given up the belief in evil spirits. The narratives suggest symptoms of epilepsy and insanity, but some of them include the peculiar feature of recognition of Jesus' Messiahship by the demons. The well-authenticated phenomenon of dual or even multiple personality may throw some light on these cases.

Occasionally today an individual ceases to be integrated in himself, a unified person, and appears to be alternately dominated by conflicting individualities. In Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* we have the story of such a person. A modern missionary in Korea tells of exorcising evil spirits from possessed natives, by using New Testament methods. However we may account for these abnormal conditions, Mark makes it clear that Jesus healed distress of mind as truly as of body.

III. The Morning Watch

After his strenuous Sabbath, with its new and exciting experiences with their taxing demands upon his nervous energy, Jesus felt the need of spiritual recuperation and, early in the morning, "in the calm dew and freshness of the morn," he went to a deserted spot to commune with God. As on a later occasion, he perceived that virtue had gone out of him. He needed rest, opportunity for thinking things over and for preparing himself for future demands upon him. His vital forces had been drained.

Religion in America is largely characterized by activity, by rush and hurry; the desire to do something practically helpful. Mark stresses this in his gospel, in accordance with the impulsive character of Peter who is said to have furnished him his recollections. Yet in the midst of this picture of external acts, we have the corresponding one of internal thought. In the former he is an Occidental, in the lonely prayer he reveals the Oriental mystic who said, "I live by the Father." Surely the well-rounded Christian needs to practise both aspects of religion.

IV. The Interruption

Simon and the others became anxious about their new teacher. Could he have left them for some other disciples? Did he prefer some other place for his ministry? The Greek tells us "they pursued" him, till they had found him. They brought him a message of universal desire for him. Often we read of similar interruptions but Jesus never was irritated but used the opportunity for teaching or further service.

His overpowering sense of mission is evident here. He is not a drifter, a pleasure seeker, not a tourist but a pilgrim. "To this end came I forth" from Capernaum and also from the bosom of the Father. How life gains in definiteness, in efficiency and in the joy of a unified personality when it seeks the fulfilment of a high purpose!

The synagogues, found in every town, afforded Jesus, as they later did to Paul in the Gentile world, a congregation. Their services were something like our prayer-meetings, in which strangers can participate. Jesus' motto was ever: "Forward."

V. The Leper

The crowd hastily shrink away from the pitiable and repulsive sufferer, who presses toward Jesus and in the urgency of his entreaty kneels before him. He was accustomed to repulsion but now he finds sympathy. Jesus actually *touched* the loathsome creature and reassured the sufferer before healing him. As in the case of Peter's wife's mother, he identifies himself with the unfortunate. He could say with the prophet, "I sat where they sat" (Ezek. 3:15).

Dr. Richard Cabot, of Harvard University, has said that one of the peculiar characteristics of Christianity is physical service, as seen in Christ's washing the disciples' feet and the acts of kindness described in the parable of the Last Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46). We have in the healing of the leper an illustration of this.

There is a question as to just what this leprosy was. The name appears to have been given to a whole class of diseases characterized by uncleanness. Sometimes it seems to mean the terrible malady, elephantiasis, or the less offensive and distressing, psoriasis. The writer has seen lepers in Bergen, Norway, with joints missing from the hands.

Jesus commanded sternly that the healed man should say nothing to anyone. We need to recall that our Lord has authority: "Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am." He did not desire the dangerous enthusiasm which might have led crowds to try to make him a king by force, but he wished the law (Lev. 13:49; 14:2) to be fulfilled, and perhaps thought this "testimony" to the priests would show them that a prophet had come. But the healed man disobeyed his benefactor. The result was interference with Christ's work. We are reminded of the nine ungrateful healed lepers in Luke 17. This man was not sufficiently thankful to be obedient; he talked too much. How many church people do that today! It seems to be a common fault among ministers, especially. Jesus could not enter into a city, because it had become known that he had touched a leper, and was therefore ceremonially unclean.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ Roger Babson, Moderator of the National Council of Congregational Churches, and a leading business statistician, argues that Protestant ministers would be more efficient if, like Catholic priests, they did not marry. Discuss this from the standpoints of the saving to the churches in lower salaries; of more time to devote to the parish work; of the minister's personal happiness; of scandals that might arise; of the value of home life; of the contribution which ministers' children, by virtue of both their heredity and their environment, have made to the world. Cf. 1 Cor. 9:5; 1 Tim. 3:2; Heb. 13:4.

¶ Peter, with others, besought Jesus to heal his wife's mother. In spite of many cheap jokes about mothers-in-law, there have been many happy relationships between married people and the mothers of their spouses. Recall Ruth and Naomi. Where friction does develop, what steps can be taken to bring about harmonious relations between "in-laws"?

¶ If it be true that the alternation of energy and rest, of active labor and

deep devotion, is necessary to a well-balanced spiritual life, how can each of us fit into our personal time-schedules a definite period for personal worship? Consider "the Quiet Hour," "the Morning Watch," the use of "the Fellowship of Prayer," or other devotional manuals. How few of us can say with Jesus, "I live by the Father."

Matthew connects Jesus' ministrations to physical needs with Isaiah 53:4. Do we really care for the sufferings of others? Are our wills set to remove the world's anguish? Is our pity strong enough to overcome our repulsion toward disgusting people?

Jesus respected the quarantine regulations of his time by sending the healed man to report to the priest. Are we justified in sending ailing children to Sunday school in order that they may receive credit for unbroken attendance? How about the risk of spreading contagious diseases?

To this leper, as to the Samaritan in Luke 17 and the woman in Matthew 9, Jesus might have said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Discuss the importance of faith in achieving wholeness in mind and body and the fulfilment of God's purposes in the world.

Is not all healing "faith healing"?—somebody's faith!

It has often been said that miracles have a parabolic significance. Thus, the Feeding of the Five Thousand will teach that the more we share the bread of life, the more we have of it. So these healings of lepers symbolize Christ's power to cleanse the foulest sinners. Are we indifferent to soul health, and the leading of others to the Great Physician?

Mark tells us that Jesus was "moved with compassion." The leper knew that somebody loved him. Do you believe that the sympathizing Christ is near to all sufferers?

What practical things can we do in our community to minister to physical needs? Consider: a district or school nurse; a dental clinic; health education in the public school; the buying of Christmas seals during the next holiday season; a Rural Health District; cooperation with hospitals; support of Red Cross.

Consider also certain poor families and individual sufferers. Do we remember them at Thanksgiving and Christmas? Does someone, too poor to pay, need dental care or new glasses? Does some blind man need you to read aloud to him? Could you get him a radio? Are such activities Christian work? Remember the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

Notes and Comments

At even, when the sun was set,
The sick, O Lord, around thee lay;
O, with what diverse pains they met!
And with what joy they went away.
—*Henry Twells.*

"Among all my patients in the second half of life—that is to say, over thirty-five—there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook. . . It seems that side by side with the decline of religious life, the neuroses grow noticeably more frequent."—*Dr. C. G. Jung, quoted in Federal Council Bulletin.*

"Of all the hygienic measures to counteract depression of spirits, and all the miserable results of a distracted mind, I would undoubtedly give first place to the simple habit of prayer."—*A distinguished British psychiatrist.*

Dr. Richard C. Cabot and Rev. Russell Dicks, collaborating as physician and hospital chaplain, in *The Art of Ministering to the Sick* point out that the minister's contact with those who are ill may often induce an attitude of faith and trust which will be an important factor in recovery.

"It is not really absurd to suggest that drugs and no prayer may be about as foolish as prayer and no drugs."—*Sir Oliver Lodge.*

Teachers' Helps

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

Ministering to Physical Needs

No one will claim that Jesus healed all the sick people in Galilee, or Judea. Yet there is no record of his turning away anyone who went to him in expectant faith for bodily or mental relief. It is quite apparent from the Gospel comments that he was more solicitous about the faith of people than about their physical ailments. In fact, Jesus seemed worried about the attention his miracles were causing.

What would you expect people nowadays to do if a prophet appeared in their village who was able to cure fever, regulate mental disorder, abolish dread leprosy, and so on? You would expect them to follow him around in crowds, to take to him their sick relatives, and seek his healing ministry on every possible occasion, wouldn't you? Well, that is what happened then.

In the Twentieth Century New Testament (Mark 1:37, 38), these words are found: "Before other people were out of bed, Jesus went to a lonely place to pray. Simon and his companions seek him out, and they say, 'everyone is looking for you!' 'Let us go away from here," Jesus said, 'into the country towns near, that I may preach in them too; indeed, that was my object in coming.'"

We know that much valiant missionary endeavor has been directed toward winning the faith of unbelievers by demonstrating the healing power of surgery and medicine. The "object in coming" is to preach the gospel. Means to that end involve humane recognition of the suffering of disease, and place premium value upon those skills that have evolved from study, observation and practice. Hospitals and clinics are universally accepted in modern missionary effort.

Strange as it may seem, it is easy to substitute attention to material needs for solicitude for deeper needs. It is good to give a beggar a shirt (unless he is an impostor—as, sad to say, he often is!) but, our "object in coming" ought to be a service to the heart that beats under the shirt after the fellow puts it on. The best standards of service in social work organizations provide for sympathetic, but systematic and penetrating, inquiry into the essential facts and conditioning circumstances attending an individual, or family, or group, appearing to be out of adjustment with the social environment. The "object in coming" turns upon a deep desire to be of lasting benefit to those in need.

What we as humans seek, or ask for, may not be the same as that which we ought to have for our own good. Any father or mother knows this. Any social worker is soon aware of the truth of the statement. Jesus was approached by many who wanted relief from dread disease. Natural enough. The record indicates that the Master exercised his healing power. The record also indicates (and very plainly) that "the object in coming" was to point the way to union with God the Father.

On the island of Tanna, John G. Paton offered a red shirt as a prize to the first chief who would learn the entire alphabet. This was just after the Bible had first been printed in Tannese. The prize was won by the most dreaded savage in the community, who later told his friends concerning the letters: "They are not hard to hold, but soft and easy." Why did Paton give the red shirt? What was his "object in coming?"

There are many things about the healing deeds of Jesus that I do not understand. There are many things about the application of the miracles to our day that I do not care to comment upon, because they are wrapped about with mys-

tery. We do know that man, working in harmony with nature, is performing great miracles of conquest over disease. A good history of medicine gives fascinating tales of progress in lessening suffering and saving life. Anesthesia, plastic surgery, tetanus and gangrene antitoxins, control of epidemics and contagious diseases, dietetics, and food control indicate some of the areas where the medical profession has made great strides.

Karl Sudhof, of the University of Leipzig, states that the most important of the problems facing medical scientists are those relating to the diseases of middle and old age, the cure of cancer, and the interrelation between physical and psychological disorders. The relation between prayer and medical science in the cure of disease is the basis for many cults and shades of belief among your friends and mine. To me, faith in God involves recognition of the laws of cause and effect, deduced by observation and study on the part of those who use God-given intellect in harmony with nature. Blessed is the man who can say, in addition, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."

Before My Class of Women

O. P. E.

Ministering to Physical Needs

There were two distinct lines of work in Jesus' ministry. There was first a teaching ministry. This embraced the formal discourses like the Sermon on the Mount, the parables, familiar conversations with the disciples, discourses in the synagogues, along the highway and in homes. These make up the largest part of the Gospels.

Secondly, came the works of healing. During all his ministry, wherever he went, he met groups of sick people, lepers, men born blind. They crowded around houses where he was stopping, multitudes awaited his coming, roofs were uncovered to let down the sick in his midst. When Lazarus was sick his sisters sent forty miles to announce the news to the Saviour. He refused healing none, curing with absolute freeness, instantly and perfectly. He did refuse to work miracles for show or when they had sufficient light to know God's will (Luke 16:31).

Some, denying his supernatural power, have attempted to explain his healings by a strong will-power, or power of suggestion. But this cannot explain the curing of men born blind, or the raising of the dead.

His healing of sickness, of poverty, of hunger, sprang from his goodness of character and his desire to do good. His nature was such that it responded to every appeal of want. He went about doing good, a man like John Oxenham's "Mr. Greatheart."

Can Jesus the Healer be appealed to today? Is healing by faith a rational and scriptural plan? We do not honor God when we do not use the remedies he has provided for us, when we insist that he work for us in some special way that we define. We honor him best when we do all we can by the use of means and the use of faith to accomplish the ends which we believe will be pleasing to him and useful to him in his kingdom. He has sympathy and all help today where there is no other help.

Medical skill, the heroism of physicians, the self-sacrifice of those making experiments, the observance of God's laws of health are lessening disease. Statistics show that in the last fifty years the average span of life is lengthening.

How sensibly Moses lived. He was one hundred and twenty years old, yet his eyesight was undimmed and his natural force unabated. If all were free from vice, lived according to God's laws, and were piously and carefully caring for themselves, nervous prostrations, shortened lives, and insanity would depart from our land.

Jesus came into the world with a new teaching. He said that God is the Father of everyone, and therefore all people are brothers of equal worth in the sight of God. It is hard for us to realize how such teaching attacked the whole social and industrial order of the day. It meant for the Jews to treat the Samaritans as their equals; to stop looking down on Gentiles; to substitue love for hatred in their attitude toward foreigners. It meant the abolition of slavery, for no real man would hold his brother in bondage. It meant protection of the weak, care of the sick, conservation of the lives of children; not their destruction.

Jesus was a reformer, and he struck at the root of the prevailing evils of his day. He had announced in Nazareth his program: "To preach good tidings to the poor; to proclaim release to the captives; to set at liberty them that are bruised." It was a revolutionary program, and even now, after nineteen hundred years, it is only partly carried through.

In Jesus' time, however, there were no hospitals. Now institutions for the care of the sick, the infirm, the friendless, are found all over the world; but nowhere so many and so good as in Christian countries. The attitude toward life has been completely changed. "Conservation of health," "child welfare," "social hygiene" are familiar terms. Life has become a sacred thing, and Jesus has made it so.

The Lesson Illustrated

Susanna G. Fisher

"Helping Someone"

He healed many that were sick (Mark 1:34).

An English lady had found it necessary to employ a new footman while her husband was away from home. Instructed to meet his new master at the station upon his return, the footman asked his mistress to describe "Sir William" to him that he might be sure to greet the right man. Her answer was "He is a tall man, and you are sure to find him helping someone." I have always felt that he of whom it could be said "You are sure to find him helping someone" needed no other patent of nobility.—*Commerce and Finance.*

The Power of Prayer

He rose up and departed into a desert place and there prayed (Mark 1:35).

Years ago two missionaries, the Murrays, went to Tutuela in the South Seas. They worked with some success; there were several little churches established through the island and all was favorable and promising, but all at once, on one given night, throughout the island in each place where there was a church, an extraordinary spiritual movement began; there was a great cry for God in these churches. These two missionaries were almost afraid; they thought it was some unwholesome disturbance at first. They could not account for it at all, but they saw it was God, and they gathered in the fruit. It was many months after that the news came from the old country, from Scotland, that in Jedburgh, the town from which these two had come, on that very day a great spiritual movement had come and they had met together and were praying for Tutuela and the missionaries that very day, at that very time; and the prayers that ascended there in Jedburgh descended on Tutuela at the other side of the world. —*Dr. Robert F. Horton.*

Prayer

Kneeling down to him (Mark 1:40).

"Praying," says Dr. J. H. Jowett, "is the clearing of the blocked roads which are crowded with all sorts of worldly hindrances. It is the preparing of the way of the Lord. When I turn to the Lord in prayer I open the doors and windows of my soul toward the heavenlies, and I open them for the reception of any gifts of grace which God's holy love may wish me to receive. My reverent thought and prayer perfects communion between my soul and God."

The Master's Touch

Immediately the fever left her (Mark 1:31).

Whatever the fever, His touch can heal it;
Whatever the tempest, his voice can still;
There is only joy as we seek his pleasure,
There is only rest as we choose his will.

And some day, after life's fitful fever,
I think we shall say, in the home on high,
"If the hands that he touched but did his bidding,
How little it matters what else went by!"

—*E. G. Cherry.*

LESSON 5. JANUARY 30

CHRISTIANITY'S CONCERN FOR SPIRITUAL HEALTH

Mark 2: 1-12. (Parallels in Matt. 9: 1-8, Luke 5: 17-26)

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Psalm 32: 1-7

KEY VERSE: Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.—Mark 2: 5

1 And again he entered into Caper-
um after some days; and it was noised
at he was in the house.
2 And straightway many were gathered
gether, insomuch that there was no
om to receive them, no, not so much
about the door: and he preached the
ord unto them.
3 And they come unto him, bringing
e sick of the palsy, which was borne
four.
4 And when they could not come nigh
to him for the press, they uncovered
e roof where he was: and when they
d broken it up, they let down the bed
herein the sick of the palsy lay.
5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said
to the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins
forgiven thee.
6 But there were certain of the scribes
ting there, and reasoning in their
arts,
7 Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?
8 And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?
9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?
10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)
11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.
12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Healing and Forgiveness. ark 2: 1-12. In either case there is a lease. Many of us have known the y of being delivered from some sick-ss or injury—or the greater sense of eedom from the guilt that tortured us.
Tuesday. God Knows Our Needs. att. 6: 5-8. The problem of God's nniscience is profound and knotty; sus makes it very simple, however, nen he goes to talking about the flow-s and little birds (Matthew 6), how od is concerned for them too.
Wednesday. God Supplies Every eed. Ps. 23: 1-6. But he assumes at we shan't be needing a whole lot of ings that we don't.
Thursday. Salvation Freely Offered. a. 55: 1-7. Christ's salvation is like at (vs. 1); you have to pay for it buy"), but not in material coin; in e devotion of heart and life, rather.
Friday. Jesus Forgives a Sinner. uke 7: 36-48. Sin repelled Jesus, but nners attracted him. He hates sin, but ves sinful men.
Saturday. God's Purpose and Grace. Tim. 1: 7-14. Philosophy, ancient and odern, has cracked its head over this atter—of God's purpose and grace. or the Christian, however, there is no oblem—because in Christ Jesus it was made "manifest" (vs. 10).
Sunday. Deliverance from Sin. Ps. : 1-7. "Blessed is!" "Blessed is!" essed, you Christian, delivered through rist! You too can sing this song, un-rstandingly, and *con spirito,* (with rit).

At the Threshold of the Lesson

Wherever Jesus went, from first to last, he found need; every time he turned around he ran into someone seeking healing. There was no end of poverty, sickness and misfortune. Their rich were heartlessly indifferent; the relief of charity or of any reasonable medical treatment was unknown. As for the mentally diseased, we fairly shudder when we learn how they were treated in that age.

We should be very clear about two facts of Jesus' ministry: (1) He *was* a healer of the body. He will have recognized the dependence of soul upon body and the importance of bodily health. And, of course, he was supersensitive to and infinitely sympathetic with suffering in others. (2) *But he was preeminently a healer of souls.* He ever assumed that a strong and pure spiritual nature can, by effort, victoriously assert itself in defiance of a weak and diseased body; that, anyhow, the comfort and welfare of the body are of slighter importance than the soul's well-being and safety. We should always keep this in mind in considering Jesus' healing miracles. And that the greatest of them were those that "made whole" in a spiritual sense.

Have we any right to compare Jesus' ministries? His healing miracles, his "arousements" to better living, and his consolations may have been incidental to the spiritual renewal that he was ever seeking to effect, but they all belonged—and belong—to his salvation. The "more abundant life" that he brought—and brings—is inclusive of every good and reaches out from here and now through all eternity. To be true to Him, Christ's church must therefore work for the salvation of men in every sense; a salvation that touches body and soul, the individual and the family, society, nations and races; "all things to all men" in a larger sense than Paul intended.

Jesus does not ask, Which is easiest, to forgive sins, or to raise a sick man? but, Which is easiest, to claim this power, or to claim that? to say, Be forgiven, or to say, Arise and walk?

The Lesson Before Us

I. A Curious Crowd

"Again he entered into Capernaum." The morning after the day when he healed the demoniac and Simon Peter's mother-in-law, Jesus went apart for prayer. His companions went after him, telling him that everybody in Capernaum now wanted to see and hear him. Instead of immediately returning to gratify their curiosity, he made a short preaching tour of Galilee (1: 35-45). Now he returns.

As soon as it became known that he was back, the people gathered in crowds at the house where he was staying. We must never think of a house of the Bible as like those in which we live. The one here was probably of a single story and built around an open court. The flat roof would be reached by an outside stairway. People lived mostly out-of-doors, as today, in those countries.

At least a part of the court would be roofed over, with tiles or thin slabs, which could quickly be removed. If it was a poorer and simpler house, without a court, the low roof was of thatching, on stringers, easily "broken up" (vs. 4). Vincent tells of such roofs where grass was growing, with goats cropping it.

Not all the people had come to be helped, or out of curiosity. Critical scribes were among the number. Opposition to Jesus on the part of official Judaism, that was later to become so virulent, now begins.

II. The Paralytic and His Friends

Palsy (*paralysis*) has been called "a living death." Many of us have had the hard experience of seeing a loved one thus helpless for months or years. When there is an accompanying derangement of the brain, the helplessness becomes pitiable; but the sight of an intact mind imprisoned in a palsied body is even more pitiable. "For the press" (vs. 4) —Mrs. Montgomery has, "because of the crowd"; and, "they removed the roof under which He stood."

Notice that it says "their faith": both the man's and his bearers'. Cooperating faith has brought many to Christ. And we have a type here of the man who never gets to the nearness of Christ's blessing unless he is brought there by others.

The "bed" whereon the paralytic lay has been variously translated: "pallet," "cot," "mat." Mattress would probably be a good word. It was light enough so that when the paralytic was healed he could himself carry it away (vs. 12). "Before them all" is emphatic.

III. A Double Healing

Jesus does not resent their interruption of his preaching. He overlooks, is even pleased with, a great many impetuous, rash things that we do if in doing them we are trying to do good.

It seems likely from Jesus' words, though it does not necessarily follow, that this was a form of paralysis that had been brought on by sinful living. At any rate, the man thought so, and Jesus had first to assure him of forgiveness before he would have faith to reach out and appropriate Jesus' healing. Forgiveness; faith; salvation.

Here is a man sin-paralyzed; Paul's figure, "the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24). The will stricken, perhaps; or maybe that will encoffined in a body made impotent through lack of discipline, or by sinful living. Jesus revivifies the doubly-bound pitiable creature, releases him from the physical bondage of impotency, and releases his enslaved spiritual nature.

The scribes insisted that God alone can forgive sins. They were right. Mark always has in mind his thesis that Jesus is the Divine Lord. So here he tells how Jesus pardons the sins of this paralytic. If any mere man had spoken the words that Jesus did, it would indeed have been blasphemy; an awful sin, punishable, as Jesus knew, with death (Lev. 24:16; 1 Kings 21:10, 13).

IV. Jesus' Argument

It was a decided innovation; a new way of ridding a man of sin; in strong contrast to the old, laborious, ineffectual ways that men had before known. No wonder that they were amazed!

Jesus' argument, as stated in verses 9-11, is not easy to follow, but amounts to this: You have accused me of blasphemy. Would God give the power to a blasphemer, an awful sinner, to heal a paralytic like this man here? No, of course not. Well, then, see me do it!

So he turns to the man and works in him the healing miracle, just as easily as he had spoken the sin-pardoning words. We may believe that he would have cured the man in any case; but in doing it now he gives them a demonstration of his Godliness. (Comp. John 3:2 and 9: 16, 24ff.). The Greek word translated "Son," verse 5, indicates that the paralytic was a young man.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ If ministers (churches) should today be able to perform miracles of healing, as Jesus did, how would it affect the size of their congregations?

¶ Would the results be beneficial, or lasting? What was our Lord's experience? What does he have to say about it?

¶ From what you know of faith-healing movements in our day, have they been accompanied with spiritual revival and vitality?

¶ Does godliness always conduce to physical health?

¶ We sometimes hear people talk about "the spiritual health of the community." What would that mean?

¶ What bearing does this incident of our lesson have on medical missions? Are there reasons why a thoroughly consecrated Christian physician should not always seek to accompany his healing with spiritual ministries?

¶ Do bodily health and well-being—freedom from disease—usually make for spiritual vigor? In what ways does spiritual health make for physical well-being

¶ What should be the attitude of the church toward healing as one of its functions? If it enters upon a healing ministry, what dangers should be guarded against?

Notes and Comments

Capernaum was at the northwestern end of the Lake of Galilee. We assume it to have been Jesus' home—perhaps a Peter's—during his Galilean ministry after his rejection at Nazareth (4:13). It was a place of considerable size and importance. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament, and our Lord's prophecy of its obliteration has been so fulfilled that today its exact site is undetermined.

A man said to me of his brother, a distinguished physician, "He is the kindest-hearted, most sympathetic person in the world; yet he fairly dotes on disease; it fascinates and absorbs him; in one sense he loves it. Do you think it strange for me to say that? But the end of all his interest in disease is its cure. That was Jesus' interest in sin.

"Urgent physical need must be met at once, even if it interrupts a religious meeting. Urgent spiritual need must be met at once, even if it interrupts a physical ministration."—*A. Bruce Curry.*

"How is it that He says he came not for the righteous? Were there those for whom it needed not that He should come? Nay, for no one is righteous by the law" (Hilary). But Chrysostom "We may suppose that He was speaking ironically."

The ministry begun in Galilee is broadening every day. The hands, the voices the tears, the services of Christians are still a part of the ministry of our Lord to a sinning, suffering, sorrowing world. The Great Physician is always on his rounds—in his disciples.

Teachers' Helps

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

Ministering to Spiritual Needs

Of course, the thought for today was anticipated in last Sunday's lesson. In Christian teaching it is quite natural to think of spiritual when we say physical. Nine times out of ten, if you ask for salt at the table, you will receive salt and pepper. It seems to me to be wholesome that spiritual and physical are frequently thought of in the same breath. Why not? Is not life rounded and unified? We do not like pain, we do not want suffering; we want to be healthy. We do not like sin, we do not like estrangement from God; we want to be in soul, as well as in body, healthy.

The cure of a paralyzed man, as told in the lesson Scripture for today, needs little elaboration. Too much comment spoils it. I have just read it and you know it.

Our Master was in Capernaum. He had been there before, having been entertained in the home of Simon's mother-in-law. Naturally enough, the word go about that the great Healer was there again. You know how news spreads in a small town. A great crowd gathered Jesus took advantage of the opportunity to preach to them. A little commotion is noticeable on the edge of the crowd but Jesus keeps right on talking. It wasn't a big enough disturbance to do much damage to the meeting—that is, at that particular moment. But something happened—something unusual. What? You couldn't guess, so I will tell you.

Four men were carrying a helpless cripple (very bad case—completely paralyzed —couldn't walk!) on a light stretcher, or sleeping-mat. Of course they wanted to get their paralyzed friend to Jesus, because they had heard about the sudden cure of Simon's relative when Jesus was in town the other time. Maybe they said to their sick friend:

"Reuben, keep your spirits up; we will get you to this great Healer, even if we have to go through the roof."

That might seem a bit fanciful to us but it was not impossible at all. The houses there are one-story affairs, with

le roof gardens (maybe they took sun hs; but I do not know about that). ere probably were stairs leading up outside; often there were. At any e, Reuben's friends (I do not know at his name was, but it is easier to "Reuben," than to say every time man sick of the palsy") took him to roof, tore up some of the loose tiles, thatch, or whatever the roofing ma- ial was, and let him down in front of us.

What challenges me is that our Lord not at first do anything about his sy. What he did do astonished the ient, the four nurses, the crowd, and ecially some rabbis who were present. said, "Your sins are forgiven!" I nder what the four nurses, or porters he "friends"—thought of this. I sh we had some record about it. Do u suppose they looked at each other d thought, "All this work for noth- g!" As you read this story, you can- t escape the thought that Jesus was tting first things first. It is a fair de- ction to say that spiritual rehabilitation med bigger and more important than ysical cure. Sensing a great deal of ticism by the rabbis, Jesus demon- ated his authority to forgive sins. To paralytic he said, "Roll up your bed- g and go home." *And he did!* Pre- mably the four friends tarried long ough to pay for the damage to the of, if any.

Is it fanciful to say that this man, in tting more than he went for, illustrates ely how he who seeks in faith the at- tion of the great Teacher and Healer ll also receive "riches untold?" Is it yond our experience to state that a nistry to our spiritual needs stands out the hope of our hearts?

Generally in life we "get what we pay r." We invest brains to get an educa- n. We invest good food habits to de- lop a good digestion. We invest in ep and rest to get health. We seek ace and pursue it, we strive for the ht, we aspire to fellowship with our d, in order to develop spiritual poise d power.

Ernie Pyle, after a trip on the cutter rthland in the Bering Sea, tells about borate mechanical devices, used every enty miles, to sample water at various pths, mud from the bottom, and the e; also about storing those samples d sending them to scientific bodies, and Coast and Geodetic Survey. He ites, "Commander Zeusler has had re- ests from twenty-five universities for ter specimens this summer (1937)." for himself, he says:

'The only thing I'm sure of is that ey've found that the water runs out of Pacific Ocean and up through Bering raits, and then around the top of rth America, and comes down past eenland into the North Atlantic, full icebergs."

Ernie Pyle's modesty, of course, is lly humor. He is sure of many things importance about the Bering Sea.

The analogy may be weak. It suggests to me, however, that we do much wandering around in this life of ours, with little appreciation of its great possibilities. Let us go to Jesus for forgiveness, for inspiration, for motive power. Maybe we shall have to push our way through obstacles. It may mean effort. The "man sick of the palsy" did it.

Before My Class of Women

E. K. H.

Ministering to Spiritual Needs

To Mark's eager, open mind and careful observation came the testimony of John the Baptist as to Jesus' Messiahship, the testimony of the Father as to His Beloved Son, the testimony of healing—which was a godlike power—and now there followed the testimony of forgiveness of sin.

Again we find ourselves reading of the throngs which gathered at the door of his abiding-place so soon as ever it was noised that he had returned to Capernaum. And it must have been a sorry crowd, pitiful in its pain, dominated by its sin.

To Jesus the sadness and the ugliness of sin was greater than the thraldom of disease. He freed men from sickness because of his sympathy and his compassion, it is true. But also because it opened the way for him to free them from sin. Let us try today to realize the vital importance of this power!

1. In *the plan* of God. (*a*) *It meets man's initial need.* I had almost said his greatest need. But that I deeply believe to be fellowship with God. Before this can come, salvation must come. Salvation through Jesus Christ, which is first of all the forgiveness of sin. Jesus' action in this instance proves the claim. He looked beyond the stricken body to the stricken soul, and he said with no preliminary, "Thy sins be forgiven thee."

(*b*) *It makes spiritual progress possible,* and thus meets man's greatest need. Not that this is especially taught by any part of this particular story. But we know that no forward step in spiritual life is possible until man is right with God through forgiveness and a sense that nothing now need hinder the divine fellowship which is his highest good, which is his dynamic in serving others.

2. *In the mind of Mark.* And in our mind (*a*) *it transcends the power to heal.* We all recognize this. Paralyzed limbs made whole will some day fail once more and perish like all flesh. But souls made whole from the ravages of sin will live and serve through all eternity. And that power which controls the eternal is greater than that which controls the merely temportal, because it meets the really vital need.

(*b*) *It identifies Christ with God.* The scribes began with the right premise, but they did not have the courage to go on to the right conclusion. Like the scribes we too say, "Who can forgive sins but God only?" But when we hear the Great Teacher pardoning sin, proving his power to do so by his obvious authority over visible disease, then we too cry out, "We never saw it on this fashion." And our conviction goes beyond theirs, for they marveled most at his healing of the paralytic while we are convinced of his actual dominion over sin, its penalty and power. And this makes him one with God, "who forgiveth all thine iniquities" (Ps. 103:2).

To us today comes this comfort: we may be sick in body, and there may be no complete healing for us in the will of God; but never can we fail of spiritual health if we will but come to Christ, who is the Healer of the sin-sickness of our souls.

Modern Christianity is making good use of recent psychology, and is stressing the mutual relationship between body and spirit, but this must not let us neglect the all-importance of the spiritual.

The Lesson Illustrated

Susanna G. Fisher

Poison

Thy sins be forgiven thee (Mark 2:5).

Doctor Chapman relates that after an earnest sermon by a distinguished minister, dealing plainly and pointedly with sin, one of the church officers came to the study of the pastor and expressed himself somewhat as follows: "We do not want you to talk as plainly as you did about sin, because if our boys and girls hear you talking so much about sin they will more easily become sinners. Call it a mistake, if you will, but do not speak so plainly about sin." The pastor listened attentively. Then he took down a small bottle of strychnine marked "Poison," and showed it to his visitor, saying, "I see what you want me to do. You want me to change the label. Now suppose I take this label off and substitute another, say, 'Essence of Peppermint,' do you not see what happens? The milder you make the label the more dangerous you make your poison."—*Unknown.*

The Sun of Righteousness

That ye may know that the Son of man hath power to forgive sins (Mark 2:10).

You might pound a lump of ice with a pestle into a thousand fragments, but it would still continue ice. But bring it in beside your own bright fire, and soon in their genial glow the living waters flow. A man may try to make himself contrite. He may search out his sins, and dwell on all their enormity, and still feel no true repentance. But come to Jesus with his words of grace and truth. Let that flinty, frozen spirit bask in the beams of the Sun of righteousness—then will it melt.—*Dr. James Hamilton.*

A Suggested Order of Service

Prepared by NATHAN PIERCE, JR.

OPENING MUSIC. Piano, organ, or orchestra. The pieces should be spirited enough to quiet the confusion, but sufficiently sober to put those present in a worshipful mood.

PRAYER, preferably by the superintendent, followed by the Lord's Prayer (in unison).

HYMN. Suggested: "Who Is On the Lord's Side?"; "Come, My Soul, Thou Must Be Waking!"; "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven!"

RESPONSIVE READING.

Superintendent. Praise ye the Lord! Both young men and maidens; old men and children:

School. Let them praise the name of the Lord; for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.

Superintendent. Honor and majesty are before him: strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

School. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.

Superintendent. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us;

School. And establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

Superintendent. That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth;

School. That our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace:

Superintendent. Thus saith the Lord, I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem;

School. And Jerusalem shall be called, A city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of Hosts, The holy mountain.

Superintendent. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.

School. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

Superintendent. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one.

School. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning.

All. The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

HYMN. Suggested: "Still, Still with Thee"; "Dare to Be Brave, Dare to Be True"; "Encamped Along the Hills of Light."

SCRIPTURE READING. Suggested: John 15:1-14; Philippians 4:4-13; Hebrews 6:1-11.

SPECIAL EXERCISES, such as birthday offering, missionary, evangelistic, or temperance talk.

HYMN. Suggested: "Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross"; "My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less"; "I Would Be True"; "'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus."

PRAYER (by one of the teachers, or the pastor).

CLASS PERIOD.

CLOSING WORSHIP.

MUSIC, for reassembling of classes (dignified, but not too quiet).

SUPERINTENDENT'S FIVE MINUTES, for brief, stimulating reports, announcements, and, at least on some Sundays, an invitation to make the decision for Christ.

SECRETARY AND TREASURER'S REPORT.

HYMN. Suggested: "Sowing the Seed in the Early Morning Gray"; "O Jesus, I Have Promised"; "One More Day's Work for Jesus."

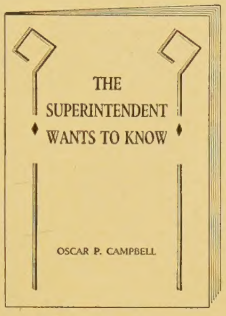
BENEDICTION. Mizpah, or Numbers 6:24-26 (in unison).

elpful Books for Sunday School Workers

he Superintendent Wants to Know

A Handbook for the Layman Serving as Church School Superintendent

By Oscar P. Campbell



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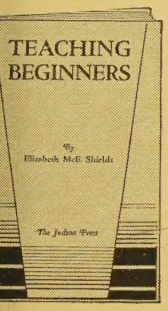

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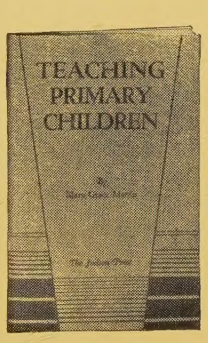

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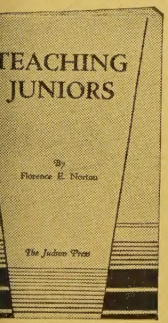

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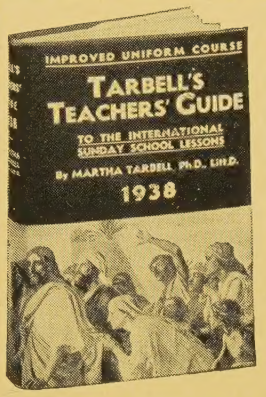

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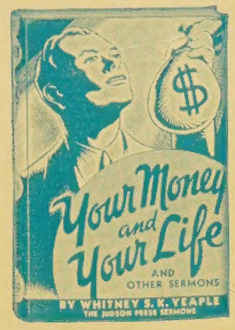

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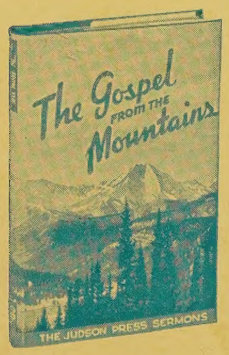

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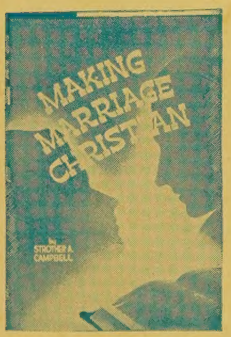

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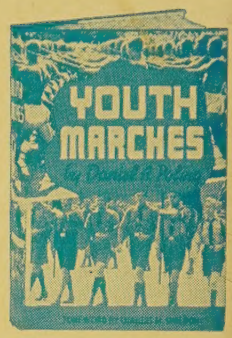

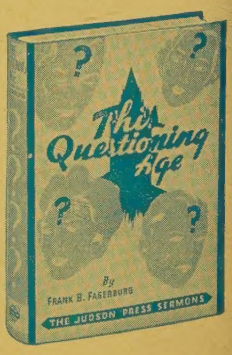

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